LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
FEB 20 1924
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

~~B1253~~
~~.T794~~
~~v.5~~

SCC
#11,565
v.5

THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN LOCKE,

IN NINE VOLUMES.

THE NINTH EDITION.

VOLUME THE FIFTH.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. LONGMAN, B. LAW AND SON, J. JOHNSON,
C. DILLY, G. G. AND J. ROBINSON, T. CADELL, J. SEWELL,
W. OTRIDGE, W. RICHARDSON, F. AND C. RIVINGTON,
W. GOLDSMITH, T. PAYNE, LEIGH AND SOTHEBY,
S. HAYES, R. FAULDER, B. AND J. WHITE,
W. LOWNDES, G. AND T. WILKIE,
AND J. WALKER.

1794.

CONTENTS

OF THIS

VOLUME.

	Page
A LETTER concerning Toleration, being a Tranſlation of the Epiſtola de Tolerantia - -	1
A ſecond Letter concerning Toleration - -	59
A third Letter for Toleration: To the Author of the third Letter concerning Toleration - -	139
A fourth Letter for Toleration - -	547
Index.	

A

LETTER

CONCERNING

TOLERATION.

TO THE

READER.

THE enſuing Letter concerning Toleration, firſt printed in Latin this very year, in Holland, has already been tranſlated both into Dutch and French.—So general and ſpeedy an approbation may therefore beſpeak its favourable reception in England. I think indeed there is no nation under heaven, in which ſo much has already been ſaid upon that ſubject, as ours. But yet certainly there is no people that ſtand in more need of having ſomething further both ſaid and done amongſt them, in this point, than we do.

Our government has not only been partial in matters of religion; but thoſe alſo who have ſuffered under that partiality, and have therefore endeavoured by their writings to vindicate their own rights and liberties, have for the moſt part done it upon narrow principles, ſuited only to the intereſts of their own ſects.

This narrowneſs of ſpirit on all ſides has undoubtedly been the principal occaſion of our miſeries and confuſions. But whatever have been the occaſions, it is now high time to ſeek for a thorough cure. We have need of more generous remedies than what have yet been made uſe of in our diſtemper. It is neither de-

clarations of indulgence, nor acts of comprehenſion, ſuch as have yet been practiſed or projected amongſt us, that can do the work. The firſt will but palliate, the ſecond increaſe our evil.

ABSOLUTE LIBERTY, JUST AND TRUE LIBERTY, EQUAL AND IMPARTIAL LIBERTY, IS THE THING THAT WE STAND IN NEED OF. Now though this has indeed been much talked of, I doubt it has not been much underſtood; I am ſure not at all practiſed, either by our governors towards the people in general, or by any diſſenting parties of the people towards one another.

I cannot therefore but hope that this diſcourſe, which treats of that ſubject, however briefly, yet more exactly than any we have yet ſeen, demonſtrating both the equitableneſs and practicableneſs of the thing, will be eſteemed highly ſeaſonable, by all men who have ſouls large enough to prefer the true intereſt of the public, before that of a party.

It is for the uſe of ſuch as are already ſo ſpirited, or to inſpire that ſpirit into thoſe that are not, that I have tranſlated it into our language. But the thing itſelf is ſo ſhort, that it will not bear a longer preface. I leave it therefore to the conſideration of my countrymen, and heartily wiſh they may make the uſe of it that it appears to be deſigned for.

A LETTER CONCERNING TOLERATION.

HONOURED SIR,

SINCE you are pleaſed to inquire what are my thoughts about the mutual toleration of chriſtians in their different profeſſions of religion, I muſt needs anſwer you freely, that I eſteem that toleration to be the chief characteriſtical mark of the true church. For whatſoever ſome people boaſt of the antiquity of places and names, or of the pomp of their outward worſhip; others, of the reformation of their diſcipline; all, of the orthodoxy of their faith, for every one is orthodox to himſelf: theſe things, and all others of this nature, are much rather marks of men's ſtriving for power and empire over one another, than of the church of Chriſt. Let any one have ever ſo true a claim to all theſe things,

yet if he be deſtitute of charity, meekneſs, and good-will in general towards all mankind, even to thoſe that are not chriſtians, he is certainly yet ſhort of being a true chriſtian himſelf. "The kings of the gentiles exercise lordſhip over them, ſaid our Saviour to his diſciples, but ye ſhall not be ſo," Luke xxii. 25, 26. The buſineſs of true religion is quite another thing. It is not inſtituted in order to the erecting an external pomp, nor to the obtaining of eccleſiaſtical dominion, nor to the exerciſing of compulſive force; but to the regulating of men's lives according to the rules of virtue and piety. Whoſoever will liſt himſelf under the banner of Chriſt, muſt, in the firſt place and above all things, make war upon his own luſts and vices. It is in vain for any man to uſurp the name of chriſtian, without holineſs of life, purity of manners, and benignity and meekneſs of ſpirit. "Let every one that nameth the name of Chriſt, depart from iniquity. 2 Tim. ii. 19. Thou, when thou art converted, ſtrengthen thy brethren," ſaid our Lord to Peter, Luke xxii. 32. It would indeed be very hard for one that appears careleſs about his own ſalvation, to perſuade me that he were extremely concerned for mine. For it is impoſſible that thoſe ſhould ſincerely and heartily apply themſelves to make other people chriſtians, who have not really embraced the chriſtian religion in their own hearts. If the goſpel and the apoſtles may be credited, no man can be a chriſtian without charity, and without that faith which works, not by force, but by love. Now I appeal to the conſciences of thoſe that perſecute, torment, deſtroy, and kill other men upon pretence of religion, whether they do it out of friendſhip and kindneſs towards them, or no: and I ſhall then indeed, and not till then, believe they do ſo, when I ſhall ſee thoſe fiery zealots correcting, in the ſame manner, their friends and familiar acquaintance, for the manifeſt ſins they commit againſt the precepts of the goſpel; when I ſhall ſee them proſecute with fire and ſword the members of their own communion that are tainted with enormous vices, and without amendment are in danger of eternal perdition; and when I ſhall ſee them thus expreſs

expreſs their love and deſire of the ſalvation of their ſouls, by the infliction of torments, and exerciſe of all manner of cruelties. For if it be out of a principle of charity, as they pretend, and love to men's ſouls, that they deprive them of their eſtates, maim them with corporal puniſhments, ſtarve and torment them in noiſome priſons, and in the end even take away their lives; I ſay, if all this be done merely to make men chriſtians, and procure their ſalvation, why then do they ſuffer "whoredom, fraud, malice, and ſuch like enormities," which, according to the apoſtle, Rom. i. manifeſtly reliſh of heatheniſh corruption, to predominate ſo much and abound amongſt their flocks and people? Theſe, and ſuch like things, are certainly more contrary to the glory of God, to the purity of the church, and to the ſalvation of ſouls, than any conſcientious diſſent from eccleſiaſtical deciſion, or ſeparation from public worſhip, whilſt accompanied with innocency of life. Why then does this burning zeal for God, for the church, and for the ſalvation of ſouls; burning, I ſay, literally, with fire and faggot; paſs by thoſe moral vices and wickedneſſes, without any chaſtiſement, which are acknowledged by all men to be diametrically oppoſite to the profeſſion of chriſtianity; and bend all its nerves either to the introducing of ceremonies, or to the eſtabliſhment of opinions, which for the moſt part are about nice and intricate matters, that exceed the capacity of ordinary underſtandings? Which of the parties contending about theſe things is in the right, which of them is guilty of ſchiſm or hereſy, whether thoſe that domineer or thoſe that ſuffer, will then at laſt be manifeſt, when the cauſe of their ſeparation comes to be judged of. He certainly that follows Chriſt, embraces his doctrine, and bears his yoke, though he forſake both father and mother, ſeparate from the public aſſemblies and ceremonies of his country, or whomſoever, or whatſoever elſe he relinquiſhes, will not then be judged an heretic.

Now, though the diviſions that are amongſt ſects ſhould be allowed to be ever ſo obſtructive of the ſalvation of ſouls; yet nevertheleſs "adultery, fornica-

" tion, uncleanneſs, laſciviouſneſs, idolatry, and ſuch " like things, cannot be denied to be works of the " fleſh;" concerning which the apoſtle has expreſsly declared, that " they who do them ſhall not inherit the " kingdom of God," Gal. v. 21. Whoſoever therefore is ſincerely ſolicitous about the kingdom of God, and thinks it his duty to endeavour the enlargement of it amongſt men, ought to apply himſelf with no leſs care and induſtry to the rooting out of theſe immoralities, than to the extirpation of ſects. But if any one do otherwiſe, and whilſt he is cruel and implacable towards thoſe that differ from him in opinion, he be indulgent to ſuch iniquities and immoralities as are unbecoming the name of a chriſtian, let ſuch a one talk ever ſo much of the church, he plainly demonſtrates by his actions, that it is another kingdom he aims at, and not the advancement of the kingdom of God.

That any man ſhould think fit to cauſe another man, whoſe ſalvation he heartily deſires, to expire in torments, and that even in an unconverted eſtate, would, I confeſs, ſeem very ſtrange to me, and, I think, to any other alſo. But nobody, ſurely, will ever believe that ſuch a carriage can proceed from charity, love, or goodwill. If any one maintain that men ought to be compelled by fire and ſword to profeſs certain doctrines, and conform to this or that exteriour worſhip, without any regard had unto their morals; if any one endeavour to convert thoſe that are erroneous unto the faith, by forcing them to profeſs things that they do not believe, and allowing them to practiſe things that the goſpel does not permit; it cannot be doubted indeed, that ſuch a one is deſirous to have a numerous aſſembly joined in the ſame profeſſion with himſelf; but that he principally intends by thoſe means to compoſe a truly chriſtian church, is altogether incredible. It is not therefore to be wondered at, if thoſe who do not really contend for the advancement of the true religion, and of the church of Chriſt, make uſe of arms that do not belong to the chriſtian warfare. If, like the captain of our ſalvation, they ſincerely deſired the good of ſouls,

they

they would tread in the ſteps and follow the perfect example of that prince of peace, who ſent out his ſoldiers to the ſubduing of nations, and gathering them into his church, not armed with the ſword, or other inſtruments of force, but prepared with the goſpel of peace, and with the exemplary holineſs of their converſation. This was his method. Though if infidels were to be converted by force, if thoſe that are either blind or obſtinate were to be drawn off from their errours by armed ſoldiers, we know very well that it was much more eaſy for him to do it with armies of heavenly legions, than for any ſon of the church, how potent ſoever, with all his dragoons.

The toleration of thoſe that differ from others in matters of religion, is ſo agreeable to the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, and to the genuine reaſon of mankind, that it ſeems monſtrous for men to be ſo blind, as not to perceive the neceſſity and advantage of it, in ſo clear a light. I will not here tax the pride and ambition of ſome, the paſſion and uncharitable zeal of others. Theſe are faults from which human affairs can perhaps ſcarce ever be perfectly freed; but yet ſuch as nobody will bear the plain imputation of, without covering them with ſome ſpecious colour; and ſo pretend to commendation, whilſt they are carried away by their own irregular paſſions. But however, that ſome may not colour their ſpirit of perſecution and unchriſtian cruelty, with a pretence of care of the public weal, and obſervation of the laws; and that others, under pretence of religion, may not ſeek impunity for their libertiniſm and licentiouſneſs; in a word, that none may impoſe either upon himſelf or others, by the pretences of loyalty and obedience to the prince, or of tenderneſs and ſincerity in the worſhip of God; I eſteem it above all things neceſſary to diſtinguiſh exactly the buſineſs of civil government from that of religion, and to ſettle the juſt bounds that lie between the one and the other. If this be not done, there can be no end put to the controverſies that will be always ariſing between thoſe that have, or at leaſt pretend to have, on the one ſide, a concern-

ment

ment for the intereſt of men's ſouls, and, on the other ſide, a care of the commonwealth.

The commonwealth ſeems to me to be a ſociety of men conſtituted only for the procuring, preſerving, and advancing their own civil intereſts.

Civil intereſt I call life, liberty, health, and indolency of body; and the poſſeſſion of outward things, ſuch as money, lands, houſes, furniture, and the like.

It is the duty of the civil magiſtrate, by the impartial execution of equal laws, to ſecure unto all the people in general, and to every one of his ſubjects in particular, the juſt poſſeſſion of theſe things belonging to this life. If any one preſume to violate the laws of public juſtice and equity, eſtabliſhed for the preſervation of theſe things, his preſumption is to be checked by the fear of puniſhment, conſiſting in the deprivation or diminution of thoſe civil intereſts, or goods, which otherwiſe he might and ought to enjoy. But ſeeing no man does willingly ſuffer himſelf to be puniſhed by the deprivation of any part of his goods, and much leſs of his liberty or life, therefore is the magiſtrate armed with the force and ſtrength of all his ſubjects, in order to the puniſhment of thoſe that violate any other man's rights.

Now that the whole juriſdiction of the magiſtrate reaches only to theſe civil concernments; and that all civil power, right and dominion, is bounded and confined to the only care of promoting theſe things; and that it neither can nor ought in any manner to be extended to the ſalvation of ſouls; theſe following conſiderations ſeem unto me abundantly to demonſtrate.

Firſt, Becauſe the care of ſouls is not committed to the civil magiſtrate, any more than to other men. It is not committed unto him, I ſay, by God; becauſe it appears not that God has ever given any ſuch authority to one man over another, as to compel any one to his religion. Nor can any ſuch power be veſted in the magiſtrate by the conſent of the people; becauſe no man can ſo far abandon the care of his own ſalvation, as blindly to leave it to the choice of any other, whether

prince

prince or ſubject, to preſcribe to him what faith or worſhip he ſhall embrace. For no man can, if he would, conform his faith to the dictates of another. All the life and power of true religion conſiſts in the inward and full perſuaſion of the mind; and faith is not faith without believing. Whatever profeſſion we make, to whatever outward worſhip we conform, if we are not fully ſatisfied in our own mind that the one is true, and the other well-pleaſing unto God, ſuch profeſſion and ſuch practice, far from being any furtherance, are indeed great obſtacles to our ſalvation. For in this manner, inſtead of expiating other ſins by the exerciſe of religion, I ſay, in offering thus unto God Almighty ſuch a worſhip as we eſteem to be diſpleaſing unto him, we add unto the number of our other ſins, thoſe alſo of hypocriſy, and contempt of his Divine Majeſty.

In the ſecond place. The care of ſouls cannot belong to the civil magiſtrate, becauſe his power conſiſts only in outward force: but true and ſaving religion conſiſts in the inward perſuaſion of the mind, without which nothing can be acceptable to God. And ſuch is the nature of the underſtanding, that it cannot be compelled to the belief of any thing by outward force. Confiſcation of eſtate, impriſonment, torments, nothing of that nature can have any ſuch efficacy as to make men change the inward judgment that they have framed of things.

It may indeed be alleged, that the magiſtrate may make uſe of arguments, and thereby draw the heterodox into the way of truth, and procure their ſalvation. I grant it; but this is common to him with other men. In teaching, inſtructing, and redreſſing the erroneous by reaſon, he may certainly do what becomes any good man to do. Magiſtracy does not oblige him to put off either humanity or chriſtianity. But it is one thing to perſuade, another to command; one thing to preſs with arguments, another with penalties. This the civil power alone has a right to do; to the other, good-will is authority enough. Every man has commiſſion to admoniſh, exhort, convince another of errour, and by reaſoning to draw him into truth: but to give laws, receive obedience,

obedience, and compel with the ſword, belongs to none but the magiſtrate. And upon this ground I affirm, that the magiſtrate's power extends not to the eſtabliſhing of any article of faith, or forms of worſhip, by the force of his laws. For laws are of no force at all without penalties, and penalties in this caſe are abſolutely impertinent; becauſe they are not proper to convince the mind. Neither the profeſſion of any articles of faith, nor the conformity to any outward form of worſhip, as has been already ſaid, can be available to the ſalvation of ſouls, unleſs the truth of the one, and the acceptableneſs of the other unto God, be thoroughly believed by thoſe that ſo profeſs and practiſe. But penalties are no ways capable to produce ſuch belief. It is only light and evidence that can work a change in men's opinions; and that light can in no manner proceed from corporal ſufferings, or any other outward penalties.

In the third place, The care of the ſalvation of men's ſouls cannot belong to the magiſtrate; becauſe, though the rigour of laws and the force of penalties were capable to convince and change men's minds, yet would not that help at all to the ſalvation of their ſouls. For, there being but one truth, one way to heaven; what hopes is there that more men would be led into it, if they had no other rule to follow but the religion of the court, and were put under a neceſſity to quit the light of their own reaſon, to oppoſe the dictates of their own conſciences, and blindly to reſign up themſelves to the will of their governors, and to the religion, which either ignorance, ambition, or ſuperſtition had chanced to eſtabliſh in the countries where they were born? In the variety and contradiction of opinions in religion, wherein the princes of the world are as much divided as in their ſecular intereſts, the narrow way would be much ſtraitened; one country alone would be in the right, and all the reſt of the world put under an obligation of following their princes in the ways that lead to deſtruction: and that which heightens the abſurdity, and very ill ſuits the notion of a deity, men would owe their eternal happineſs or miſery to the places of their nativity.

Theſe

These considerations, to omit many others that might have been urged to the same purpose, seem unto me sufficient to conclude, that all the power of civil government relates only to men's civil interests, is confined to the care of the things of this world, and hath nothing to do with the world to come.

Let us now consider what a church is. A church then I take to be a voluntary society of men, joining themselves together of their own accord, in order to the public worshipping of God, in such a manner as they judge acceptable to him, and effectual to the salvation of their souls.

I say, it is a free and voluntary society. Nobody is born a member of any church; otherwise the religion of parents would descend unto children, by the same right of inheritance as their temporal estates, and every one would hold his faith by the same tenure he does his lands; than which nothing can be imagined more absurd. Thus therefore that matter stands. No man by nature is bound unto any particular church or sect, but every one joins himself voluntarily to that society in which he believes he has found that profession and worship which is truly acceptable to God. The hopes of salvation, as it was the only cause of his entrance into that communion, so it can be the only reason of his stay there. For if afterwards he discover any thing either erroneous in the doctrine, or incongruous in the worship of that society to which he has joined himself, why should it not be as free for him to go out as it was to enter? No member of a religious society can be tied with any other bonds but what proceed from the certain expectation of eternal life. A church then is a society of members voluntarily uniting to this end.

It follows now that we consider what is the power of this church, and unto what laws it is subject.

Forasmuch as no society, how free soever, or upon whatsoever slight occasion instituted, (whether of philosophers for learning, of merchants for commerce, or of men of leisure for mutual conversation and discourse) no church or company, I say, can in the least subsist and hold together, but will presently dissolve and break

to pieces, unleſs it be regulated by ſome laws, and the members all conſent to obſerve ſome order. Place and time of meeting muſt be agreed on; rules for admitting and excluding members muſt be eſtabliſhed; diſtinction of officers, and putting things into a regular courſe, and ſuch like, cannot be omitted. But ſince the joining together of ſeveral members into this church-ſociety, as has already been demonſtrated, is abſolutely free and ſpontaneous, it neceſſarily follows, that the right of making its laws can belong to none but the ſociety itſelf, or at leaſt, which is the ſame thing, to thoſe whom the ſociety by common conſent has authoriſed thereunto.

Some perhaps may object, that no ſuch ſociety can be ſaid to be a true church, unleſs it have in it a biſhop, or preſbyter, with ruling authority derived from the very apoſtles, and continued down unto the preſent time by an uninterrupted ſucceſſion.

To theſe I anſwer. In the firſt place, Let them ſhow me the edict by which Chriſt has impoſed that law upon his church. And let not any man think me impertinent, if, in a thing of this conſequence, I require that the terms of that edict be very expreſs and poſitive.—For the promiſe he has made us, that "whereſoever two "or three are gathered together in his name, he will be "in the midſt of them," Matth. xviii. 20. ſeems to imply the contrary. Whether ſuch an aſſembly want any thing neceſſary to a true church, pray do you conſider. Certain I am, that nothing can be there wanting unto the ſalvation of ſouls, which is ſufficient for our purpoſe.

Next, pray obſerve how great have always been the diviſions amongſt even thoſe who lay ſo much ſtreſs upon the divine inſtitution, and continued ſucceſſion of a certain order of rulers in the church. Now their very diſſenſion unavoidably puts us upon a neceſſity of deliberating, and conſequently allows a liberty of chooſing that, which upon conſideration we prefer.

And, in the laſt place, I conſent that theſe men have a ruler of their church, eſtabliſhed by ſuch a long ſeries of ſucceſſion as they judge neceſſary, provided I may

may have liberty at the same time to join myself to that society, in which I am persuaded those things are to be found which are necessary to the salvation of my soul. In this manner ecclesiastical liberty will be preserved on all sides, and no man will have a legislator imposed upon him, but whom himself has chosen.

But since men are so solicitous about the true church, I would only ask them here by the way, if it be not more agreeable to the church of Christ to make the conditions of her communion consist in such things, and such things only, as the Holy Spirit has in the Holy Scriptures declared, in express words, to be necessary to salvation? I ask, I say, whether this be not more agreeable to the church of Christ, than for men to impose their own inventions and interpretations upon others, as if they were of divine authority; and to establish by ecclesiastical laws, as absolutely necessary to the profession of Christianity, such things as the Holy Scriptures do either not mention, or at least not expressly command? Whosoever requires those things in order to ecclesiastical communion, which Christ does not require in order to life eternal, he may perhaps indeed constitute a society accommodated to his own opinion, and his own advantage; but how that can be called the church of Christ, which is established upon laws that are not his, and which excludes such persons from its communion, as he will one day receive into the kingdom of heaven, I understand not. But this being not a proper place to inquire into the marks of the true church, I will only mind those that contend so earnestly for the decrees of their own society, and that cry out continually the CHURCH, the CHURCH, with as much noise, and perhaps upon the same principle, as the Ephesian silversmiths did for their Diana; this, I say, I desire to mind them of, that the Gospel frequently declares, that the true disciples of Christ must suffer persecution; but that the church of Christ should persecute others, and force others by fire and sword to embrace her faith and doctrine, I could never yet find in any of the books of the New Testament.

The

The end of a religious ſociety, as has already been ſaid, is the public worſhip of God, and by means thereof the acquiſition of eternal life. All diſcipline ought therefore to tend to that end, and all eccleſiaſtical laws to be thereunto confined. Nothing ought, nor can be tranſacted in this ſociety, relating to the poſſeſſion of civil and worldly goods. No force is here to be made uſe of, upon any occaſion whatſoever: for force belongs wholly to the civil magiſtrate, and the poſſeſſion of all outward goods is ſubject to his juriſdiction.

But it may be aſked, by what means then ſhall eccleſiaſtical laws be eſtabliſhed, if they muſt be thus deſtitute of all compulſive power? I anſwer, they muſt be eſtabliſhed by means ſuitable to the nature of ſuch things, whereof the external profeſſion and obſervation, if not proceeding from a thorough conviction and approbation of the mind, is altogether uſeleſs and unprofitable. The arms by which the members of this ſociety are to be kept within their duty, are exhortations, admonitions, and advice. If by theſe means the offenders will not be reclaimed, and the erroneous convinced, there remains nothing farther to be done, but that ſuch ſtubborn and obſtinate perſons, who give no ground to hope for their reformation, ſhould be caſt out and ſeparated from the ſociety. This is the laſt and utmoſt force of eccleſiaſtical authority: no other puniſhment can thereby be inflicted, than that the relation ceaſing between the body and the member which is cut off, the perſon ſo condemned ceaſes to be a part of that church.

Theſe things being thus determined, let us inquire in the next place, how far the duty of Toleration extends, and what is required from every one by it.

And firſt, I hold, that no church is bound by the duty of Toleration to retain any ſuch perſon in her boſom, as after admonition continues obſtinately to offend againſt the laws of the ſociety. For theſe being the condition of communion, and the bond of ſociety, if the breach of them were permitted without any animadverſion, the ſociety would immediately be thereby diſſolved. But nevertheleſs, in all ſuch caſes care is to be taken

taken that the ſentence of excommunication, and the execution thereof, carry with it no rough uſage, of word or action, whereby the ejected perſon may any ways be damnified in body or eſtate. For all force, as has often been ſaid, belongs only to the magiſtrate, nor ought any private perſons, at any time, to uſe force; unleſs it be in ſelf-defence againſt unjuſt violence. Excommunication neither does nor can deprive the excommunicated perſon of any of thoſe civil goods that he formerly poſſeſſed. All thoſe things belong to the civil government, and are under the magiſtrate's protection. The whole force of excommunication conſiſts only in this, that the reſolution of the ſociety in that reſpect being declared, the union that was between the body and ſome member, comes thereby to be diſſolved; and that relation ceaſing, the participation of ſome certain things, which the ſociety communicated to its members, and unto which no man has any civil right, comes alſo to ceaſe. For there is no civil injury done unto the excommunicated perſon, by the church miniſter's refuſing him that bread and wine, in the celebration of the Lord's ſupper, which was not bought with his, but other men's money.

Secondly: No private perſon has any right in any manner to prejudice another perſon in his civil enjoyments, becauſe he is of another church or religion. All the rights and franchiſes that belong to him as a man, or as a deniſon, are inviolably to be preſerved to him. Theſe are not the buſineſs of religion. No violence nor injury is to be offered him, whether he be chriſtian or pagan. Nay, we muſt not content ourſelves with the narrow meaſures of bare juſtice: charity, bounty, and liberality muſt be added to it. This the Goſpel enjoins, this reaſon directs, and this that natural fellowſhip we are born into requires of us. If any man err from the right way, it is his own misfortune, no injury to thee: nor therefore art thou to puniſh him in the things of this life, becauſe thou ſuppoſeſt he will be miſerable in that which is to come.

What I ſay concerning the mutual toleration of private perſons differing from one another in religion, I

underſtand alſo of particular churches; which ſtand as it were in the ſame relation to each other as private perſons among themſelves; nor has any one of them any manner of juriſdiction over any other, no not even when the civil magiſtrate, as it ſometimes happens, comes to be of this or the other communion. For the civil government can give no new right to the church, nor the church to the civil government. So that whether the magiſtrate join himſelf to any church, or ſeparate from it, the church remains always as it was before, a free and voluntary ſociety. It neither acquires the power of the ſword by the magiſtrate's coming to it, nor does it loſe the right of inſtruction and excommunication by his going from it. This is the fundamental and immutable right of a ſpontaneous ſociety, that it has to remove any of its members who tranſgreſs the rules of its inſtitution: but it cannot, by the acceſſion of any new members, acquire any right of juriſdiction over thoſe that are not joined with it. And therefore peace, equity, and friendſhip, are always mutually to be obſerved by particular churches, in the ſame manner as by private perſons, without any pretence of ſuperiority or juriſdiction over one another.

That the thing may be made yet clearer by an example; let us ſuppoſe two churches, the one of arminians, the other of calviniſts, reſiding in the city of Conſtantinople. Will any one ſay, that either of theſe churches has right to deprive the members of the other of their eſtates and liberty, as we ſee practiſed elſewhere, becauſe of their differing from it in ſome doctrines or ceremonies; whilſt the Turks in the mean while ſilently ſtand by, and laugh to ſee with what inhuman cruelty chriſtians thus rage againſt chriſtians? But if one of theſe churches hath this power of treating the other ill, I aſk which of them it is to whom that power belongs, and by what right? It will be anſwered, undoubtedly, that it is the orthodox church which has the right of authority over the erroneous or heretical. This is, in great and ſpecious words, to ſay juſt nothing at all. For every church is orthodox to itſelf; to others, erroneous or heretical. Whatſoever

ever any church believes, it believes to be true; and the contrary thereunto it pronounces to be errour. So that the controverſy between theſe churches about the truth of their doctrines, and the purity of their worſhip, is on both ſides equal; nor is there any judge, either at Conſtantinople, or elſewhere upon earth, by whoſe ſentence it can be determined. The deciſion of that queſtion belongs only to the Supreme Judge of all men, to whom alſo alone belongs the puniſhment of the erroneous. In the mean while, let thoſe men conſider how heinouſly they ſin, who, adding injuſtice, if not to their errour, yet certainly to their pride, do raſhly and arrogantly take upon them to miſuſe the ſervants of another maſter, who are not at all accountable to them.

Nay, further: if it could be manifeſt which of theſe two diſſenting churches were in the right way, there would not accrue thereby unto the orthodox any right of deſtroying the other. For churches have neither any juriſdiction in worldly matters, nor are fire and ſword any proper inſtruments wherewith to convince men's minds of errour, and inform them of the truth. Let us ſuppoſe, nevertheleſs, that the civil magiſtrate is inclined to favour one of them, and to put his ſword into their hands, that, by his conſent, they might chaſtiſe the diſſenters as they pleaſed. Will any man ſay, that any right can be derived unto a chriſtian church, over its brethren, from a Turkiſh emperor? An infidel, who has himſelf no authority to puniſh chriſtians for the articles of their faith, cannot confer ſuch an authority upon any ſociety of chriſtians, nor give unto them a right which he has not himſelf. This would be the caſe at Conſtantinople. And the reaſon of the thing is the ſame in any chriſtian kingdom. The civil power is the ſame in every place: nor can that power, in the hands of a chriſtian prince, confer any greater authority upon the church, than in the hands of a heathen; which is to ſay, juſt none at all.

Nevertheleſs, it is worthy to be obſerved, and lamented, that the moſt violent of theſe defenders of the truth, the oppoſers of errour, the exclaimers againſt

ſchiſm, do hardly ever let looſe this their zeal for God, with which they are ſo warmed and inflamed, unleſs where they have the civil magiſtrate on their ſide. But ſo ſoon as ever court-favour has given them the better end of the ſtaff, and they begin to feel themſelves the ſtronger; then preſently peace and charity are to be laid aſide: otherwiſe, they are religiouſly to be obſerved. Where they have not the power to carry on perſecution, and to become maſters, there they deſire to live upon fair terms, and preach up toleration. When they are not ſtrengthened with the civil power, then they can bear moſt patiently, and unmovedly, the contagion of idolatry, ſuperſtition, and hereſy, in their neighbourhood; of which, on other occaſions, the intereſt of religion makes them to be extremely apprehenſive. They do not forwardly attack thoſe errours which are in faſhion at court, or are countenanced by the government. Here they can be content to ſpare their arguments: which yet, with their leave, is the only right method of propagating truth; which has no ſuch way of prevailing, as when ſtrong arguments and good reaſon are joined with the ſoftneſs of civility and good uſage.

No-body therefore, in fine, neither ſingle perſons, nor churches, nay, nor even commonwealths, have any juſt title to invade the civil rights and worldly goods of each other, upon pretence of religion. Thoſe that are of another opinion, would do well to conſider with themſelves how pernicious a ſeed of diſcord and war, how powerful a provocation to endleſs hatreds, rapines, and ſlaughters, they thereby furniſh unto mankind. No peace and ſecurity, no not ſo much as common friendſhip, can ever be eſtabliſhed or preſerved amongſt men, ſo long as this opinion prevails "that dominion "is founded in grace, and that religion is to be propa- "gated by force of arms."

In the third place: Let us ſee what the duty of toleration requires from thoſe who are diſtinguiſhed from the reſt of mankind, from the laity, as they pleaſe to call us, by ſome eccleſiaſtical character and office; whether they be biſhops, prieſts, preſbyters, miniſters, or

or however elſe dignified or diſtinguiſhed. It is not my buſineſs to inquire here into the original of the power or dignity of the clergy. This only I ſay, that whenceſoever their authority be ſprung, ſince it is eccleſiaſtical, it ought to be confined within the bounds of the church, nor can it in any manner be extended to civil affairs; becauſe the church itſelf is a thing abſolutely ſeparate and diſtinct from the commonwealth. The boundaries on both ſides are fixed and immoveable. He jumbles heaven and earth together, the things moſt remote and oppoſite, who mixes theſe ſocieties, which are, in their original, end, buſineſs, and in every thing, perfectly diſtinct, and infinitely different from each other. No man therefore, with whatſoever eccleſiaſtical office he be dignified, can deprive another man that is not of his church and faith, either of liberty, or of any part of his worldly goods, upon the account of that difference which is between them in religion. For whatſoever is not lawful to the whole church cannot, by any eccleſiaſtical right, become lawful to any of its members.

But this is not all. It is not enough that eccleſiaſtical men abſtain from violence and rapine, and all manner of perſecution. He that pretends to be a ſucceſſor of the apoſtles, and takes upon him the office of teaching, is obliged alſo to admoniſh his hearers of the duties of peace and good-will towards all men; as well towards the erroneous as the orthodox; towards thoſe that differ from them in faith and worſhip, as well as towards thoſe that agree with them therein: and he ought induſtriouſly to exhort all men, whether private perſons or magiſtrates, if any ſuch there be in his church, to charity, meekneſs, and toleration; and diligently endeavour to allay and temper all that heat, and unreaſonable averſeneſs of mind, which either any man's fiery zeal for his own ſect, or the craft of others, has kindled againſt diſſenters. I will not undertake to repreſent how happy and how great would be the fruit, both in church and ſtate, if the pulpits every-where ſounded with this doctrine of peace and toleration; leſt I ſhould ſeem to reflect too ſeverely upon thoſe men

whoſe dignity I deſire not to detract from, nor would have it diminiſhed either by others or themſelves. But this I ſay, that thus it ought to be. And if any one that profeſſes himſelf to be a miniſter of the word of God, a preacher of the goſpel of peace, teach otherwiſe; he either underſtands not, or neglects the buſineſs of his calling, and ſhall one day give account thereof unto the prince of peace. If chriſtians are to be admoniſhed that they abſtain from all manner of revenge, even after repeated provocations and multiplied injuries; how much more ought they who ſuffer nothing, who have had no harm done them, to forbear violence, and abſtain from all manner of ill uſage towards thoſe from whom they have received none? This caution and temper they ought certainly to uſe towards thoſe who mind only their own buſineſs, and are ſolicitous for nothing but that, whatever men think of them, they may worſhip God in that manner which they are perſuaded is acceptable to him, and in which they have the ſtrongeſt hopes of eternal ſalvation. In private domeſtic affairs, in the management of eſtates, in the conſervation of bodily health, every man may conſider what ſuits his own conveniency, and follow what courſe he likes beſt. No man complains of the ill management of his neighbour's affairs. No man is angry with another for an errour committed in ſowing his land, or in marrying his daughter. No-body corrects a ſpendthrift for conſuming his ſubſtance in taverns. Let any man pull down, or build, or make whatſoever expences he pleaſes, no-body murmurs, no-body controls him; he has his liberty. But if any man do not frequent the church, if he do not there conform his behaviour exactly to the accuſtomed ceremonies, or if he brings not his children to be initiated in the ſacred myſteries of this or the other congregation; this immediately cauſes an uproar, and the neighbourhood is filled with noiſe and clamour. Every one is ready to be the avenger of ſo great a crime. And the zealots hardly have patience to refrain from violence and rapine, ſo long till the cauſe be heard, and the poor man be, according to form, condemned to the loſs of liberty, goods, or life. Oh

that

that our eccleſiaſtical orators, of every ſect, would apply themſelves, with all the ſtrength of argument that they are able, to the confounding of men's errours! But let them ſpare their perſons. Let them not ſupply their want of reaſons with the inſtruments of force, which belong to another juriſdiction, and do ill become a churchman's hands. Let them not call in the magiſtrate's authority to the aid of their eloquence, or learning; leſt perhaps, whilſt they pretend only love for the truth, this their intemperate zeal, breathing nothing but fire and ſword, betray their ambition, and ſhow that what they deſire is temporal dominion. For it will be very difficult to perſuade men of ſenſe, that he, who with dry eyes, and ſatisfaction of mind, can deliver his brother unto the executioner, to be burnt alive, does ſincerely and heartily concern himſelf to ſave that brother from the flames of hell in the world to come.

In the laſt place. Let us now conſider what is the magiſtrate's duty in the buſineſs of toleration: which is certainly very conſiderable.

We have already proved, that the care of ſouls does not belong to the magiſtrate: not a magiſterial care, I mean, if I may ſo call it, which conſiſts in preſcribing by laws, and compelling by puniſhments. But a charitable care, which conſiſts in teaching, admoniſhing, and perſuading, cannot be denied unto any man. The care therefore of every man's ſoul belongs unto himſelf, and is to be left unto himſelf. But what if he neglect the care of his ſoul? I anſwer, what if he neglect the care of his health, or of his eſtate; which things are nearlier related to the government of the magiſtrate than the other? Will the magiſtrate provide by an expreſs law, that ſuch an one ſhall not become poor or ſick? Laws provide, as much as is poſſible, that the goods and health of ſubjects be not injured by the fraud or violence of others; they do not guard them from the negligence or ill-huſbandry of the poſſeſſors themſelves. No man can be forced to be rich or healthful, whether he will or no. Nay, God himſelf will not ſave men againſt their wills. Let us ſuppoſe, however, that ſome prince were deſirous to force his ſubjects to accumulate

riches, or to preſerve the health and ſtrength of their bodies. Shall it be provided by law, that they muſt conſult none but roman phyſicians, and ſhall every one be bound to live according to their preſcriptions? What, ſhall no potion, no broth be taken, but what is prepared either in the Vatican, ſuppoſe, or in a Geneva ſhop? Or, to make theſe ſubjects rich, ſhall they all be obliged by law to become merchants, or muſicians? Or, ſhall every one turn victualler, or ſmith, becauſe there are ſome that maintain their families plentifully, and grow rich in thoſe profeſſions? But it may be ſaid, there are a thouſand ways to wealth, but one only way to heaven. It is well ſaid indeed, eſpecially by thoſe that plead for compelling men into this or the other way; for if there were ſeveral ways that lead thither, there would not be ſo much as a pretence left for compulſion. But now, if I be marching on with my utmoſt vigour, in that way which, according to the ſacred geography, leads ſtraight to Jeruſalem; why am I beaten and ill uſed by others, becauſe, perhaps, I wear not buſkins; becauſe my hair is not of the right cut; becauſe, perhaps, I have not been dipt in the right faſhion; becauſe I eat fleſh upon the road, or ſome other food which agrees with my ſtomach; becauſe I avoid certain by-ways, which ſeem unto me to lead into briars or precipices; becauſe, amongſt the ſeveral paths that are in the ſame road, I chooſe that to walk in which ſeems to be the ſtraighteſt and cleaneſt; becauſe I avoid to keep company with ſome travellers that are leſs grave, and others that are more ſour than they ought to be; or in fine, becauſe I follow a guide that either is, or is not, cloathed in white, and crowned with a mitre? Certainly, if we conſider right, we ſhall find that for the moſt part they are ſuch frivolous things as theſe, that, without any prejudice to religion or the ſalvation of ſouls, if not accompanied with ſuperſtition or hypocriſy, might either be obſerved or omitted; I ſay, they are ſuch like things as theſe, which breed implacable enmities among chriſtian brethren, who are all agreed in the ſubſtantial and truly fundamental part of religion.

But

But let us grant unto theſe zealots, who condemn all things that are not of their mode, that from theſe circumſtances ariſe different ends. What ſhall we conclude from thence? There is only one of theſe which is the true way to eternal happineſs. But, in this great variety of ways that men follow, it is ſtill doubted which is this right one. Now neither the care of the commonwealth, nor the right of enacting laws, does diſcover this way that leads to heaven more certainly to the magiſtrate, than every private man's ſearch and ſtudy diſcovers it unto himſelf. I have a weak body, ſunk under a languiſhing diſeaſe, for which, I ſuppoſe, there is only one remedy, but that unknown. Does it therefore belong unto the magiſtrate to preſcribe me a remedy, becauſe there is but one, and becauſe it is unknown? Becauſe there is but one way for me to eſcape death, will it therefore be ſafe for me to do whatſoever the magiſtrate ordains? Thoſe things that every man ought ſincerely to inquire into himſelf, and by meditation, ſtudy, ſearch, and his own endeavours, attain the knowledge of, cannot be looked upon as the peculiar profeſſion of any one ſort of men. Princes indeed are born ſuperiour unto other men in power, but in nature equal. Neither the right, nor the art of ruling, does neceſſarily carry along with it the certain knowledge of other things; and leaſt of all of the true religion; for if it were ſo, how could it come to paſs that the lords of the earth ſhould differ ſo vaſtly as they do in religious matters? But let us grant that it is probable the way to eternal life may be better known by a prince than by his ſubjects; or at leaſt, that in this incertitude of things, the ſafeſt and moſt commodious way for private perſons is to follow his dictates. You will ſay, what then? If he ſhould bid you follow merchandize for your livelihood, would you decline that courſe for fear it ſhould not ſucceed? I anſwer, I would turn merchant upon the prince's command, becauſe in caſe I ſhould have ill ſucceſs in trade, he is abundantly able to make up my loſs ſome other way. If it be true, as he pretends, that he deſires I ſhould thrive and grow rich,

rich, he can ſet me up again when unſucceſsful voyages have broke me. But this is not the caſe, in the things that regard the life to come. If there I take a wrong courſe, if in that reſpect I am once undone, it is not in the magiſtrate's power to repair my loſs, to eaſe my ſuffering, or to reſtore me in any meaſure, much leſs entirely, to a good eſtate. What ſecurity can be given for the kingdom of heaven?

Perhaps ſome will ſay, that they do not ſuppoſe this infallible judgment that all men are bound to follow in the affairs of religion, to be in the civil magiſtrate, but in the church. What the church has determined, that the civil magiſtrate orders to be obſerved; and he provides by his authority, that nobody ſhall either act or believe, in the buſineſs of religion, otherwiſe than the church teaches; ſo that the judgment of thoſe things is in the church. The magiſtrate himſelf yields obedience thereunto, and requires the like obedience from others. I anſwer: Who ſees not how frequently the name of the church, which was ſo venerable in the time of the apoſtles, has been made uſe of to throw duſt in people's eyes, in following ages? But however, in the preſent caſe it helps us not. The one only narrow way which leads to heaven is not better known to the magiſtrate than to private perſons, and therefore I cannot ſafely take him for my guide, who may probably be as ignorant of the way as myſelf, and who certainly is leſs concerned for my ſalvation than I myſelf am. Amongſt ſo many kings of the jews, how many of them were there whom any Iſraelite, thus blindly following, had not fallen into idolatry, and thereby into deſtruction? Yet nevertheleſs, you bid me be of good courage, and tell me that all is now ſafe and ſecure, becauſe the magiſtrate does not now enjoin the obſervance of his own decrees in matters of religion, but only the decrees of the church. Of what church, I beſeech you? Of that which certainly likes him beſt. As if he that compels me by laws and penalties to enter into this or the other church, did not interpoſe his own judgment in the matter. What difference is there whether he lead me himſelf, or deliver me over to be led by others? I depend both

both ways upon his will, and it is he that determines both ways of my eternal ſtate. Would an Iſraelite, that had worſhipped Baal upon the command of his king, have been in any better condition, becauſe ſomebody had told him that the king ordered nothing in religion upon his own head, nor commanded any thing to be done by his ſubjects in divine worſhip, but what was approved by the counſel of prieſts, and declared to be of divine right by the doctors of the church? If the religion of any church become therefore true and ſaving, becauſe the head of that ſect, the prelates and prieſts, and thoſe of that tribe, do all of them, with all their might, extol and praiſe it; what religion can ever be accounted erroneous, falſe and deſtructive? I am doubtful concerning the doctrine of the ſocinians, I am ſuſpicious of the way of worſhip practiſed by the papiſts, or lutherans; will it be ever a jot the ſafer for me to join either unto the one or the other of thoſe churches, upon the magiſtrate's command, becauſe he commands nothing in religion but by the authority and counſel of the doctors of that church?

But to ſpeak the truth, we muſt acknowledge that the church, if a convention of clergymen, making canons, muſt be called by that name, is for the moſt part more apt to be influenced by the court, than the court by the church. How the church was under the viciſſitude of orthodox and arian emperors is very well known. Or if thoſe things be too remote, our modern Engliſh hiſtory affords us freſher examples, in the reigns of Henry VIII. Edward VI. Mary, and Elizabeth, how eaſily and ſmoothly the clergy changed their decrees, their articles of faith, their form of worſhip, every thing, according to the inclination of thoſe kings and queens. Yet were thoſe kings and queens of ſuch different minds, in points of religion, and enjoined thereupon ſuch different things, that no man in his wits, I had almoſt ſaid none but an atheiſt, will preſume to ſay that any ſincere and upright worſhipper of God could, with a ſafe conſcience, obey their ſeveral decrees. To conclude, It is the ſame thing whether a king that preſcribes laws to another man's religion pretend to do it by

by his own judgment, or by the eccleſiaſtical authority and advice of others. The deciſions of church-men, whoſe differences and diſputes are ſufficiently known, cannot be any founder, or ſafer than his: nor can all their ſuffrages joined together add any new ſtrength unto the civil power. Though this alſo muſt be taken notice of, that princes ſeldom have any regard to the ſuffrages of eccleſiaſtics that are not favourers of their own faith and way of worſhip.

But after all, the principal conſideration, and which abſolutely determines this controverſy, is this: Although the magiſtrate's opinion in religion be ſound, and the way that he appoints be truly evangelical, yet if I be not thoroughly perſuaded thereof in my own mind, there will be no ſafety for me in following it. No way whatſoever that I ſhall walk in againſt the dictates of my conſcience, will ever bring me to the manſions of the bleſſed. I may grow rich by an art that I take not delight in; I may be cured of ſome diſeaſe by remedies that I have not faith in; but I cannot be ſaved by a religion that I diſtruſt, and by a worſhip that I abhor. It is in vain for an unbeliever to take up the outward ſhow of another man's profeſſion. Faith only, and inward ſincerity, are the things that procure acceptance with God. The moſt likely and moſt approved remedy can have no effect upon the patient, if his ſtomach reject it as ſoon as taken; and you will in vain cram a medicine down a ſick man's throat, which his particular conſtitution will be ſure to turn into poiſon. In a word: Whatſoever may be doubtful in religion, yet this at leaſt is certain, that no religion, which I believe not to be true, can be either true or profitable unto me. In vain therefore do princes compel their ſubjects to come into their church-communion, under pretence of ſaving their ſouls. If they believe, they will come of their own accord; if they believe not, their coming will nothing avail them. How great ſoever, in fine, may be the pretence of good-will and charity, and concern for the ſalvation of men's ſouls, men cannot be forced to be ſaved whether they will or no; and therefore, when all is done, they muſt be left to their own conſciences.

Having

Having thus at length freed men from all dominion over one another in matters of religion, let us now conſider what they are to do. All men know and acknowledge that God ought to be publicly worſhipped. Why otherwiſe do they compel one another unto the public aſſemblies? Men therefore conſtituted in this liberty are to enter into ſome religious ſociety, that they may meet together, not only for mutual edification, but to own to the world that they worſhip God, and offer unto his divine majeſty ſuch ſervice as they themſelves are not aſhamed of, and ſuch as they think not unworthy of him, nor unacceptable to him; and finally, that by the purity of doctrine, holineſs of life, and decent form of worſhip, they may draw others unto the love of the true religion, and perform ſuch other things in religion as cannot be done by each private man apart.

Theſe religious ſocieties I call churches: and theſe I ſay the magiſtrate ought to tolerate. For the buſineſs of theſe aſſemblies of the people is nothing but what is lawful for every man in particular to take care of; I mean the ſalvation of their ſouls: nor in this caſe is there any difference between the national church, and other ſeparated congregations.

But as in every church there are two things eſpecially to be conſidered; the outward form and rites of worſhip, and the doctrines and articles of faith; theſe things muſt be handled each diſtinctly, that ſo the whole matter of toleration may the more clearly be underſtood.

Concerning outward worſhip, I ſay, in the firſt place, that the magiſtrate has no power to enforce by law, either in his own church, or much leſs in another, the uſe of any rites or ceremonies whatſoever in the worſhip of God. And this, not only becauſe theſe churches are free ſocieties, but becauſe whatſoever is practiſed in the worſhip of God, is only ſo far juſtifiable as it is believed by thoſe that practiſe it to be acceptable unto him.—Whatſoever is not done with that aſſurance of faith, is neither well in itſelf, nor can it be acceptable to God. To impoſe ſuch things therefore upon any people, con-

trary to their own judgment, is in effect to command them to offend God; which, conſidering that the end of all religion is to pleaſe him, and that liberty is eſſentially neceſſary to that end, appears to be abſurd beyond expreſſion.

But perhaps it may be concluded from hence, that I deny unto the magiſtrate all manner of power about indifferent things; which if it be not granted, the whole ſubject matter of law-making is taken away. No, I readily grant that indifferent things, and perhaps none but ſuch, are ſubjected to the legiſlative power. But it does not therefore follow, that the magiſtrate may ordain whatſoever he pleaſes concerning any thing that is indifferent. The public good is the rule and meaſure of all law making. If a thing be not uſeful to the commonwealth, though it be ever ſo indifferent, it may not preſently be eſtabliſhed by law.

But further: Things ever ſo indifferent in their own nature, when they are brought into the church and worſhip of God, are removed out of the reach of the magiſtrate's juriſdiction, becauſe in that uſe they have no connection at all with civil affairs. The only buſineſs of the church is the ſalvation of ſouls: and it no ways concerns the commonwealth, or any member of it, that this or the other ceremony be there made uſe of. Neither the uſe, nor the omiſſion of any ceremonies in thoſe religious aſſemblies, does either advantage or prejudice the life, liberty, or eſtate, of any man. For example: Let it be granted, that the waſhing of an infant with water is in itſelf an indifferent thing. Let it be granted alſo, that if the magiſtrate underſtand ſuch waſhing to be profitable to the curing or preventing of any diſeaſe that children are ſubject unto, and eſteem the matter weighty enough to be taken care of by a law, in that caſe he may order it to be done. But will any one therefore ſay, that the magiſtrate has the ſame right to ordain, by law, that all children ſhall be baptized by prieſts, in the ſacred font, in order to the purification of their ſouls? The extreme difference of theſe two caſes is viſible to every one at firſt ſight. Or let us apply

ply the laſt caſe to the child of a jew, and the thing will ſpeak itſelf. For what hinders but a chriſtian magiſtrate may have ſubjects that are jews? Now if we acknowledge that ſuch an injury may not be done unto a jew, as to compel him, againſt his own opinion, to practiſe in his religion a thing that is in its nature indifferent, how can we maintain that any thing of this kind may be done to a chriſtian?

Again: Things in their own nature indifferent, cannot, by any human authority, be made any part of the worſhip of God, for this very reaſon, becauſe they are indifferent. For ſince indifferent things are not capable, by any virtue of their own, to propitiate the deity; no human power or authority can confer on them ſo much dignity and excellency as to enable them to do it. In the common affairs of life, that uſe of indifferent things which God has not forbidden, is free and lawful: and therefore in thoſe things human authority has place. But it is not ſo in matters of religion. Things indifferent are not otherwiſe lawful in the worſhip of God than as they are inſtituted by God himſelf; and as he, by ſome poſitive command, has ordained them to be made a part of that worſhip which he will vouchſafe to accept of at the hands of poor ſinful men. Nor when an incenſed Deity, ſhall aſk us, "Who has re-"quired theſe or ſuch like things at your hands?" Will it be enough to anſwer him, that the magiſtrate commanded them. If civil juriſdiction extended thus far, what might not lawfully be introduced into religion? What hodge-podge of ceremonies, what ſuperſtitious inventions, built upon the magiſtrate's authority, might not, againſt conſcience, be impoſed upon the worſhippers of God: For the greateſt part of theſe ceremonies and ſuperſtitions conſiſts in the religious uſe of ſuch things as are in their own nature indifferent: nor are they ſinful upon any other account, than becauſe God is not the author of them. The ſprinkling of water, and uſe of bread and wine, are both in their own nature, and in the ordinary occaſions of life, altogether indifferent. Will any man therefore ſay that theſe things could have been introduced into religion, and made a

part

part of divine worſhip, if not by divine inſtitution? If any human authority or civil power could have done this, why might it not alſo enjoin the eating of fiſh, and drinking of ale, in the holy banquet, as a part of divine worſhip? Why not the ſprinkling of the blood of beaſts in churches, and expiations by water or fire, and abundance more of this kind? But theſe things, how indifferent ſoever they be in common uſes, when they come to be annexed unto divine worſhip, without divine authority, they are as abominable to God, as the ſacrifice of a dog. And why a dog ſo abominable? What difference is there between a dog and a goat, in reſpect of the divine nature, equally and infinitely diſtant from all affinity with matter; unleſs it be that God required the uſe of the one in his worſhip, and not of the other? We ſee therefore that indifferent things, how much ſoever they be under the power of the civil magiſtrate, yet cannot upon that pretence be introduced into religion, and impoſed upon religious aſſemblies; becauſe in the worſhip of God they wholly ceaſe to be indifferent. He that worſhips God does it with deſign to pleaſe him and procure his favour. But that cannot be done by him, who, upon the command of another, offers unto God that which he knows will be diſpleaſing to him, becauſe not commanded by himſelf. This is not to pleaſe God, or appeaſe his wrath, but willingly and knowingly to provoke him, by a manifeſt contempt; which is a thing abſolutely repugnant to the nature and end of worſhip.

But it will here be aſked: If nothing belonging to divine worſhip be left to human diſcretion, how is it then that churches themſelves have the power of ordering any thing about the time and place of worſhip, and the like? To this I anſwer; that in religious worſhip we muſt diſtinguiſh between what is part of the worſhip itſelf, and what is but a circumſtance. That is a part of the worſhip which is believed to be appointed by God, and to be well pleaſing to him; and therefore that is neceſſary. Circumſtances are ſuch things which, though in general they cannot be ſeparated from worſhip, yet the particular inſtances or modifications of them

them are not determined; and therefore they are indifferent. Of this ſort are the time and place of worſhip, the habit and poſture of him that worſhips. Theſe are circumſtances, and perfectly indifferent, where God has not given any expreſs command about them. For example: Amongſt the jews, the time and place of their worſhip, and the habits of thoſe that officiated in it, were not mere circumſtances, but a part of the worſhip itſelf; in which if any thing were defective, or different from the inſtitution, they could not hope that it would be accepted by God. But theſe, to chriſtians under the liberty of the goſpel, are mere circumſtances of worſhip, which the prudence of every church may bring into ſuch uſe as ſhall be judged moſt ſubſervient to the end of order, decency, and edification. Though even under the goſpel alſo, thoſe who believe the firſt, or the ſeventh day to be ſet apart by God, and conſecrated ſtill to his worſhip; to them that portion of time is not a ſimple circumſtance, but a real part of divine worſhip, which can neither be changed nor neglected.

In the next place: As the magiſtrate has no power to impoſe by his laws the uſe of any rites and ceremonies in any church, ſo neither has he any power to forbid the uſe of ſuch rites and ceremonies as are already received, approved, and practiſed by any church: becauſe if he did ſo, he would deſtroy the church itſelf; the end of whoſe inſtitution is only to worſhip God with freedom, after its own manner.

You will ſay, by this rule, if ſome congregations ſhould have a mind to ſacrifice infants, or, as the primitive chriſtians were falſly accuſed, luſtfully pollute themſelves in promiſcuous uncleanneſs, or practiſe any other ſuch heinous enormities, is the magiſtrate obliged to tolerate them, becauſe they are committed in a religious aſſembly? I anſwer, No. Theſe things are not lawful in the ordinary courſe of life, nor in any private houſe; and therefore neither are they ſo in the worſhip of God, or in any religious meeting. But indeed if any people congregated upon account of religion, ſhould

be desirous to sacrifice a calf, I deny that that ought to be prohibited by a law. Meliboeus, whose calf it is, may lawfully kill his calf at home, and burn any part of it that he thinks fit. For no injury is thereby done to any one, no prejudice to another man's goods. And for the same reason he may kill his calf also in a religious meeting. Whether the doing so be well-pleasing to God or no, it is their part to consider that do it.— The part of the magistrate is only to take care that the commonwealth receive no prejudice, and that there be no injury done to any man, either in life or estate. And thus what may be spent on a feast, may be spent on a sacrifice. But if peradventure such were the state of things, that the interest of the commonwealth required all slaughter of beasts should be forborn for some while, in order to the increasing of the stock of cattle, that had been destroyed by some extraordinary murrain; who sees not that the magistrate, in such a case, may forbid all his subjects to kill any calves for any use whatsoever? Only it is to be observed, that in this case the law is not made about a religious, but a political matter: nor is the sacrifice, but the slaughter of calves thereby prohibited.

By this we see what difference there is between the church and the commonwealth. Whatsoever is lawful in the commonwealth, cannot be prohibited by the magistrate in the church. Whatsoever is permitted unto any of his subjects for their ordinary use, neither can nor ought to be forbidden by him to any sect of people for their religious uses. If any man may lawfully take bread or wine, either sitting or kneeling, in his own house, the law ought not to abridge him of the same liberty in his religious worship; though in the church the use of bread and wine be very different, and be there applied to the mysteries of faith, and rites of divine worship. But those things that are prejudicial to the commonweal of a people in their ordinary use, and are therefore forbidden by laws, those things ought not to be permitted to churches in their sacred rites. Only the magistrate ought always to be very careful that he do not

not miſuſe his authority, to the oppreſſion of any church, under pretence of public good.

It may be ſaid, what if a church be idolatrous, is that alſo to be tolerated by the magiſtrate? In anſwer, I aſk, what power can be given to the magiſtrate for the ſuppreſſion of an idolatrous church, which may not, in time and place, be made uſe of to the ruin of an orthodox one? For it muſt be remembered, that the civil power is the ſame every where, and the religion of every prince is orthodox to himſelf. If therefore ſuch a power be granted unto the civil magiſtrate in ſpirituals, as that at Geneva, for example; he may extirpate, by violence and blood, the religion which is there reputed idolatrous; by the ſame rule, another magiſtrate, in ſome neighbouring country, may oppreſs the reformed religion; and, in India, the chriſtian. The civil power can either change every thing in religion, according to the prince's pleaſure, or it can change nothing. If it be once permitted to introduce any thing into religion, by the means of laws and penalties, there can be no bounds put to it; but it will in the ſame manner be lawful to alter every thing, according to that rule of truth which the magiſtrate has framed unto himſelf. No man whatſoever ought therefore to be deprived of his terreſtrial enjoyments, upon account of his religion. Not even Americans, ſubjected unto a chriſtian prince, are to be puniſhed either in body or goods, for not embracing our faith and worſhip. If they are perſuaded that they pleaſe God in obſerving the rites of their own country, and that they ſhall obtain happineſs by that means, they are to be left unto God and themſelves. Let us trace this matter to the bottom. Thus it is: an inconſiderable and weak number of chriſtians, deſtitute of every thing, arrive in a pagan country; theſe foreigners beſeech the inhabitants, by the bowels of humanity, that they would ſuccour them with the neceſſaries of life; thoſe neceſſaries are given them, habitations are granted, and they all join together, and grow up into one body of people. The chriſtian religion by this means takes root in that country, and ſpreads itſelf; but does not ſuddenly grow the

ſtrongeſt. While things are in this condition, peace, friendſhip, faith, and equal juſtice, are preſerved amongſt them. At length the magiſtrate becomes a chriſtian, and by that means their party becomes the moſt powerful. Then immediately all compacts are to be broken, all civil rights to be violated, that idolatry may be extirpated: and unleſs theſe innocent pagans, ſtrict obſervers of the rules of equity and the law of nature, and no ways offending againſt the laws of the ſociety, I ſay unleſs they will forſake their ancient religion, and embrace a new and ſtrange one, they are to be turned out of the lands and poſſeſſions of their forefathers, and perhaps deprived of life itſelf. Then at laſt it appears what zeal for the church, joined with the deſire of dominion, is capable to produce: and how eaſily the pretence of religion, and of the care of ſouls, ſerves for a cloke to covetouſneſs, rapine, and ambition.

Now whoſoever maintains that idolatry is to be rooted out of any place by laws, puniſhments, fire and ſword, may apply this ſtory to himſelf. For the reaſon of the thing is equal, both in America and Europe. And neither pagans there, nor any diſſenting chriſtians here, can with any right be deprived of their worldly goods, by the predominating faction of a court-church; nor are any civil rights to be either changed or violated upon account of religion in one place more than another.

But idolatry, ſay ſome, is a ſin, and therefore not to be tolerated. If they ſaid it were therefore to be avoided, the inference were good. But it does not follow, that becauſe it is a ſin it ought therefore to be puniſhed by the magiſtrate. For it does not belong unto the magiſtrate to make uſe of his ſword in puniſhing every thing, indifferently, that he takes to be a ſin againſt God. Covetouſneſs, uncharitableneſs, idleneſs, and many other things are ſins, by the conſent of all men, which yet no man ever ſaid were to be puniſhed by the magiſtrate. The reaſon is, becauſe they are not prejudicial to other men's rights, nor do they break the public peace of ſocieties. Nay, even the ſins of lying and perjury

perjury are no where punishable by laws; unless in certain cases, in which the real turpitude of the thing, and the offence against God, are not considered, but only the injury done unto men's neighbours, and to the commonwealth. And what if in another country, to a mahometan or a pagan prince, the christian religion seem false and offensive to God; may not the christians for the same reason, and after the same manner, be extirpated there?

But it may be urged farther, that by the law of Moses, idolaters were to be rooted out. True indeed, by the law of Moses; but that is not obligatory to us christians. Nobody pretends that every thing, generally, enjoined by the law of Moses, ought to be practised by christians. But there is nothing more frivolous than that common distinction of moral, judicial, and ceremonial law, which men ordinarily make use of. For no positive law whatsoever can oblige any people but those to whom it is given. "Hear, O Israel," sufficiently restrains the obligation of the law of Moses only to that people. And this consideration alone is answer enough unto those that urge the authority of the law of Moses, for the inflicting of capital punishments upon idolaters. But however, I will examine this argument a little more particularly.

The case of idolaters, in respect of the jewish commonwealth, falls under a double consideration. The first is of those, who, being initiated in the Mosaical rites, and made citizens of that commonwealth, did afterwards apostatize from the worship of the God of Israel. These were proceeded against as traitors and rebels, guilty of no less than high treason; for the commonwealth of the jews, different in that from all others, was an absolute theocracy: nor was there, or could there be, any difference between that commonwealth and the church. The laws established there concerning the worship of one invisible deity, were the civil laws of that people, and a part of their political government, in which God himself was the legislator. Now if any one can show me where there is a commonwealth, at this time, constituted upon that foundation, I will

acknowledge that the eccleſiaſtical laws do there unavoidably become a part of the civil; and that the ſubjects of that government both may, and ought to be kept in ſtrict conformity with that church, by the civil power. But there is abſolutely no ſuch thing, under the goſpel, as a chriſtian commonwealth. There are, indeed, many cities and kingdoms that have embraced the faith of Chriſt, but they have retained their ancient forms of government; with which the law of Chriſt hath not at all meddled. He, indeed, hath taught men how, by faith and good works, they may attain eternal life. But he inſtituted no commonwealth. He preſcribed unto his followers no new and peculiar form of government, nor put he the ſword into any magiſtrate's hand, with commiſſion to make uſe of it in forcing men to forſake their former religion, and receive his.

Secondly, Foreigners, and ſuch as were ſtrangers to the commonwealth of Iſrael, were not compelled by force to obſerve the rites of the Moſaical law. But, on the contrary, in the very ſame place where it is ordered "that an Iſraelite that was an idolater ſhould be put to "death, there it is provided that ſtrangers ſhould not "be vexed nor oppreſſed," Exod. xxii. 21. I confeſs that the ſeven nations that poſſeſſed the land which was promiſed to the Iſraelites, were utterly to be cut off. But this was not ſingly becauſe they were idolaters; for if that had been the reaſon, why were the Moabites and other nations to be ſpared? No; the reaſon is this. God being in a peculiar manner the king of the jews, he could not ſuffer the adoration of any other deity, which was properly an act of high treaſon againſt himſelf, in the land of Canaan, which was his kingdom; for ſuch a manifeſt revolt could no ways conſiſt with his dominion, which was perfectly political, in that country. All idolatry was therefore to be rooted out of the bounds of his kingdom; becauſe it was an acknowledgment of another God, that is to ſay, another king, againſt the laws of empire. The inhabitants were alſo to be driven out, that the entire poſſeſſion of the land might be given to the Iſraelites. And for the like reaſon the Emims and the Horims were driven

driven out of their countries by the children of Esau and Lot; and their lands, upon the same grounds, given by God to the invaders, Deut. ii. 12. But though all idolatry was thus rooted out of the land of Canaan, yet every idolater was not brought to execution. The whole family of Rahab, the whole nation of the Gibeonites, articled with Joshua, and were allowed by treaty: and there were many captives amongst the jews, who were idolaters. David and Solomon subdued many countries without the confines of the Land of Promise, and carried their conquests as far as Euphrates. Amongst so many captives taken, of so many nations reduced under their obedience, we find not one man forced into the jewish religion, and the worship of the true God, and punished for idolatry, though all of them were certainly guilty of it. If any one indeed, becoming a proselyte, desired to be made a denison of their commonwealth, he was obliged to submit unto their laws; that is, to embrace their religion. But this he did willingly, on his own accord, not by constraint. He did not unwillingly submit, to show his obedience; but he sought and solicited for it, as a privilege; and as soon as he was admitted, he became subject to the laws of the commonwealth, by which all idolatry was forbidden within the borders of the land of Canaan. But that law, as I have said, did not reach to any of those regions, however subjected unto the jews, that were situated without those bounds.

Thus far concerning outward worship. Let us now consider articles of faith.

The articles of religion are some of them practical, and some speculative. Now, though both sorts consist in the knowledge of truth, yet these terminate simply in the understanding, those influence the will and manners. Speculative opinions, therefore, and articles of faith, as they are called, which are required only to be believed, cannot be imposed on any church by the law of the land; for it is absurd that things should be enjoined by laws, which are not in men's power to perform; and to believe this or that to be true, does not

depend upon our will. But of this enough has been ſaid already. But, will ſome ſay, let men at leaſt profeſs that they believe. A ſweet religion, indeed, that obliges men to diſſemble, and tell lies both to God and man, for the ſalvation of their ſouls! If the magiſtrate thinks to ſave men thus, he ſeems to underſtand little of the way of ſalvation; and if he does it not in order to ſave them, why is he ſo ſolicitous about the articles of faith, as to enact them by a law?

Further, The magiſtrate ought not to forbid the preaching or profeſſing of any ſpeculative opinions in any church, becauſe they have no manner of relation to the civil rights of the ſubjects. If a roman catholic believe that to be really the body of Chriſt, which another man calls bread, he does no injury thereby to his neighbour. If a jew does not believe the New Teſtament to be the word of God, he does not thereby alter any thing in men's civil rights. If a heathen doubt of both Teſtaments, he is not therefore to be puniſhed as a pernicious citizen. The power of the magiſtrate, and the eſtates of the people, may be equally ſecure, whether any man believe theſe things or no. I readily grant, that theſe opinions are falſe and abſurd. But the buſineſs of laws is not to provide for the truth of opinions, but for the ſafety and ſecurity of the commonwealth, and of every particular man's goods and perſon. And ſo it ought to be; for truth certainly would do well enough, if ſhe were once left to ſhift for herſelf. She ſeldom has received, and I fear never will receive, much aſſiſtance from the power of great men, to whom ſhe is but rarely known, and more rarely welcome. She is not taught by laws, nor has ſhe any need of force to procure her entrance into the minds of men. Errours indeed prevail by the aſſiſtance of foreign and borrowed ſuccours. But if truth makes not her way into the underſtanding by her own light, ſhe will be but the weaker for any borrowed force violence can add to her. Thus much for ſpeculative opinions. Let us now proceed to the practical ones.

A good

A good life, in which consists not the least part of religion and true piety, concerns also the civil government: and in it lies the safety both of men's souls, and of the commonwealth. Moral actions belong therefore to the jurisdiction both of the outward and inward court; both of the civil and domestic governor; I mean, both of the magistrate and conscience. Here therefore is great danger, lest one of these jurisdictions intrench upon the other, and discord arise between the keeper of the public peace and the overseers of souls. But if what has been already said concerning the limits of both these governments be righly considered, it will easily remove all difficulty in this matter.

Every man has an immortal soul, capable of eternal happiness or misery; whose happiness depending upon his believing and doing those things in this life, which are necessary to the obtaining of God's favour, and are prescribed by God to that end. It follows from thence, first, that the observance of these things is the highest obligation that lies upon mankind, and that our utmost care, application, and diligence, ought to be exercised in the search and performance of them; because there is nothing in this world that is of any consideration in comparison with eternity. Secondly, that seeing one man does not violate the right of another, by his erroneous opinions, and undue manner of worship, nor is his perdition any prejudice to another man's affairs; therefore the care of each man's salvation belongs only to himself. But I would not have this understood, as if I meant hereby to condemn all charitable admonitions, and affectionate endeavours to reduce men from errours; which are indeed the greatest duty of a christian. Any one may employ as many exhortations and arguments as he pleases, towards the promoting of another man's salvation. But all force and compulsion are to be forborn. Nothing is to be done imperiously.—Nobody is obliged in that manner to yield obedience unto the admonitions or injunctions of another, farther than he himself is persuaded. Every man, in that, has the supreme and absolute authority of judging for himself; and the reason is, because nobody else is concerned

cerned in it, nor can receive any prejudice from his conduct therein.

But beſides their ſouls, which are immortal, men have alſo their temporal lives here upon earth; the ſtate whereof being frail and fleeting, and the duration uncertain, they have need of ſeveral outward conveniencies to the ſupport thereof, which are to be procured or preſerved by pains and induſtry; for thoſe things that are neceſſary to the comfortable ſupport of our lives, are not the ſpontaneous products of nature, nor do offer themſelves fit and prepared for our uſe. This part, therefore, draws on another care, and neceſſarily gives another employment. But the pravity of mankind being ſuch, that they had rather injuriouſly prey upon the fruits of other men's labours, than take pains to provide for themſelves; the neceſſity of preſerving men in the poſſeſſion of what honeſt induſtry has already acquired, and alſo of preſerving their liberty and ſtrength, whereby they may acquire what they farther want, obliges men to enter into ſociety with one another; that by mutual aſſiſtance and joint force, that may ſecure unto each other their properties, in the things that contribute to the comforts and happineſs of this life; leaving in the mean while to every man the care of his own eternal happineſs, the attainment whereof can neither be facilitated by another man's induſtry, nor can the loſs of it turn to another man's prejudice, nor the hope of it be forced from him by any external violence. But forafmuch as men thus entering into ſocieties, grounded upon their mutual compacts of aſſiſtance, for the defence of their temporal goods, may nevertheleſs be deprived of them, either by the rapine and fraud of their fellow-citizens, or by the hoſtile violence of foreigners: the remedy of this evil conſiſts in arms, riches, and multitudes of citizens: the remedy of others in laws: and the care of all things relating both to the one and the other, is committed by the ſociety to the civil magiſtrate. This is the original, this is the uſe, and theſe are the bounds of the legiſlative, which is the ſupreme power in every commonwealth. I mean, that proviſion may be made for the ſecurity of each man's private poſſeſſions;

poſſeſſions; for the peace, riches, and public commodities of the whole people, and, as much as poſſible, for the increaſe of their inward ſtrength againſt foreign invaſions.

Theſe things being thus explained, it is eaſy to underſtand to what end the legiſlative power ought to be directed, and by what meaſures regulated; and that is the temporal good and outward proſperity of the ſociety; which is the ſole reaſon of men's entering into ſociety, and the only thing they ſeek and aim at in it; and it is alſo evident what liberty remains to men in reference to their eternal ſalvation, and that is, that every one ſhould do what he in his conſcience is perſuaded to be acceptable to the Almighty, on whoſe good pleaſure and acceptance depends his eternal happineſs; for obedience is due in the firſt place to God, and afterwards to the laws.

But ſome may aſk, "What if the magiſtrate ſhould "enjoin any thing by his authority, that appears un-"lawful to the conſcience of a private perſon?" I anſwer, that if government be faithfully adminiſtered, and the counſels of the magiſtrate be indeed directed to the public good, this will ſeldom happen. But if perhaps it do ſo fall out, I ſay, that ſuch a private perſon is to abſtain from the actions that he judges unlawful; and he is to undergo the puniſhment, which is not unlawful for him to bear; for the private judgment of any perſon concerning a law enacted in political matters, for the public good, does not take away the obligation of that law, nor deſerve a diſpenſation. But if the law indeed be concerning things that lie not within the verge of the magiſtrate's authority; as for example, that the people, or any party amongſt them, ſhould be compelled to embrace a ſtrange religion, and join in the worſhip and ceremonies of another church; men are not in theſe caſes obliged by that law, againſt their conſciences; for the political ſociety is inſtituted for no other end, but only to ſecure every man's poſſeſſion of the things of this life. The care of each man's ſoul, and of the things of heaven, which neither does belong to the

the commonwealth, nor can be ſubjected to it, is left intirely to every man's ſelf. Thus the ſafeguard of men's lives, and of the things that belong unto this life, is the buſineſs of the commonwealth; and the preſerving of thoſe things unto their owners is the duty of the magiſtrate; and therefore the magiſtrate cannot take away theſe worldly things from this man, or party, and give them to that; nor change property amongſt fellow-ſubjects, no not even by a law, for a cauſe that has no relation to the end of civil government; I mean for their religion; which, whether it be true or falſe, does no prejudice to the worldly concerns of their fellow-ſubjects, which are the things that only belong unto the care of the commonwealth.

"But what if the magiſtrate believe ſuch a law as this "to be for the public good?" I anſwer: as the private judgment of any particular perſon, if erroneous, does not exempt him from the obligation of law, ſo the private judgment, as I may call it, of the magiſtrate, does not give him any new right of impoſing laws upon his ſubjects, which neither was in the conſtitution of the government granted him, nor ever was in the power of the people to grant: and leaſt of all, if he make it his buſineſs to enrich and advance his followers and fellow-ſectaries with the ſpoils of others. But what if the magiſtrate believe that he has a right to make ſuch laws, and that they are for the public good: and his ſubjects believe the contrary? Who ſhall be judge between them? I anſwer, God alone; for there is no judge upon earth between the ſupreme magiſtrate and the people. God, I ſay, is the only judge in this caſe, who will retribute unto every one at the laſt day according to his deſerts; that is, according to his ſincerity and uprightneſs in endeavouring to promote piety, and the public weal and peace of mankind. But what ſhall be done in the mean while? I anſwer: the principal and chief care of every one ought to be of his own ſoul firſt, and, in the next place, of the public peace: though yet there are few will think it is peace there, where they ſee all laid waſte. There are two ſorts of conteſts amongſt

amongſt men; the one managed by law, the other by force: and they are of that nature, that where the one ends, the other always begins. But it is not my buſineſs to inquire into the power of the magiſtrate in the different conſtitutions of nations. I only know what uſually happens where controverſies ariſe, without a judge to determine them. You will ſay then the magiſtrate being the ſtronger will have his will, and carry his point. Without doubt. But the queſtion is not here concerning the doubtfulneſs of the event, but the rule of right.

But to come to particulars. I ſay, Firſt, No opinions contrary to human ſociety, or to thoſe moral rules which are neceſſary to the preſervation of civil ſociety, are to be tolerated by the magiſtrate. But of thoſe indeed examples in any church are rare. For no ſect can eaſily arrive to ſuch a degree of madneſs, as that it ſhould think fit to teach, for doctrines of religion, ſuch things as manifeſtly undermine the foundations of ſociety, and are therefore condemned by the judgment of all mankind: becauſe their own intereſt, peace, reputation, every thing would be thereby endangered.

Another more ſecret evil, but more dangerous to the commonwealth, is when men arrogate to themſelves, and to thoſe of their own ſect, ſome peculiar prerogative covered over with a ſpecious ſhow of deceitful words, but in effect oppoſite to the civil rights of the community. For example: We cannot find any ſect that teaches expreſly and openly, that men are not obliged to keep their promiſe; that princes may be dethroned by thoſe that differ from them in religion; or that the dominion of all things belongs only to themſelves. For theſe things, propoſed thus nakedly and plainly, would ſoon draw on them the eye and hand of the magiſtrate, and awaken all the care of the commonwealth to a watchfulneſs againſt the ſpreading of ſo dangerous an evil. But nevertheleſs, we find thoſe that ſay the ſame things in other words. What elſe do they mean, who teach that "faith is not to be kept with "heretics?" Their meaning, forſooth, is, that the privilege of breaking faith belongs unto themſelves: for they

they declare all that are not of their communion to be heretics, or at leaſt may declare them ſo whenſoever they think fit. What can be the meaning of their aſſerting that "kings excommunicated forfeit their crowns "and kingdoms?" It is evident that they thereby arrogate unto themſelves the power of depoſing kings: becauſe they challenge the power of excommunication as the peculiar right of their hierarchy. "That do-"minion is founded in grace," is alſo an aſſertion by which thoſe that maintain it do plainly lay claim to the poſſeſſion of all things. For they are not ſo wanting to themſelves as not to believe, or at leaſt as not to profeſs, themſelves to be the truly pious and faithful. Theſe therefore, and the like, who attribute unto the faithful, religious, and orthodox, that is, in plain terms, unto themſelves, any peculiar privilege or power above other mortals, in civil concernments; or who, upon pretence of religion, do challenge any manner of authority over ſuch as are not aſſociated with them in their eccleſiaſtical communion; I ſay theſe have no right to be tolerated by the magiſtrate; as neither thoſe that will not own and teach the duty of tolerating all men in matters of mere religion. For what do all theſe and the like doctrines ſignify, but that they may, and are ready upon any occaſion to ſeize the government, and poſſeſs themſelves of the eſtates and fortunes of their fellow-ſubjects; and that they only aſk leave to be tolerated by the magiſtrates ſo long, until they find themſelves ſtrong enough to effect it.

Again: That church can have no right to be tolerated by the magiſtrate, which is conſtituted upon ſuch a bottom, that all thoſe who enter into it, do thereby ipſo facto deliver themſelves up to the protection and ſervice of another prince. For by this means the magiſtrate would give way to the ſettling of a foreign juriſdiction in his own country, and ſuffer his own people to be liſted, as it were, for ſoldiers againſt his own government. Nor does the frivolous and fallacious diſtinction between the court and the church afford any remedy to this inconvenience; eſpecially when both the one and the other are equally ſubject to the abſolute

authority

authority of the ſame perſon; who has not only power to perſuade the members of his church to whatſoever he liſts, either as purely religious, or as in order thereunto; but can alſo enjoin it them on pain of eternal fire. It is ridiculous for any one to profeſs himſelf to be a mahometan only in religion, but in every thing elſe a faithful ſubject to a chriſtian magiſtrate, whilſt at the ſame time he acknowledges himſelf bound to yield blind obedience to the mufti of Conſtantinople; who himſelf is intirely obedient to the Ottoman emperor, and frames the feigned oracles of that religion according to his pleaſure. But this mahometan living amongſt chriſtians, would yet more apparently renounce their government, if he acknowledged the ſame perſon to be head of his church, who is the ſupreme magiſtrate in the ſtate.

Laſtly, Thoſe are not at all to be tolerated who deny the being of God. Promiſes, covenants, and oaths, which are the bonds of human ſociety, can have no hold upon an atheiſt. The taking away of God, though but even in thought, diſſolves all. Beſides alſo, thoſe that by their atheiſm undermine and deſtroy all religion, can have no pretence of religion whereupon to challenge the privilege of a toleration. As for other practical opinions, though not abſolutely free from all errour, yet if they do not tend to eſtabliſh domination over others, or civil impunity to the church in which they are taught, there can be no reaſon why they ſhould not be tolerated.

It remains that I ſay ſomething concerning thoſe aſſemblies, which being vulgarly called, and perhaps having ſometimes been conventicles, and nurſeries of factions and ſeditions, are thought to afford the ſtrongeſt matter of objection againſt this doctrine of toleration. But this has not happened by any thing peculiar unto the genius of ſuch aſſembles, but by the unhappy circumſtances of an oppreſſed or ill-ſettled liberty. Theſe accuſations would ſoon ceaſe, if the law of toleration were once ſo ſettled, that all churches were obliged to lay down toleration as the foundation of their own liberty; and teach that liberty of conſcience is every man's

man's natural right, equally belonging to diſſenters as to themſelves; and that no-body ought to be compelled in matters of religion either by law or force. The eſtabliſhment of this one thing would take away all ground of complaints and tumults upon account of conſcience. And theſe cauſes of diſcontents and animoſities being once removed, there would remain nothing in theſe aſſemblies that were not more peaceable, and leſs apt to produce diſturbance of ſtate, than in any other meetings whatſoever. But let us examine particularly the heads of theſe accuſations.

You will ſay, that "aſſemblies and meetings endanger the public peace, and threaten the commonwealth." I anſwer: if this be ſo, why are there daily ſuch numerous meetings in markets, and courts of judicature? Why are crowds upon the Exchange, and a concourſe of people in cities ſuffered? You will reply; theſe are civil aſſembles, but thoſe we object againſt are eccleſiaſtical. I anſwer: it is a likely thing indeed, that ſuch aſſemblies as are altogether remote from civil affairs, ſhould be moſt apt to embroil them. O, but civil aſſemblies are compoſed of men that differ from one another in matters of religion: but theſe eccleſiaſtical meetings are of perſons that are all of one opinion. As if an agreement in matters of religion were in effect a conſpiracy againſt the commonwealth: or as if men would not be ſo much the more warmly unanimous in religion, the leſs liberty they had of aſſembling. But it will be urged ſtill, that civil aſſemblies are open, and free for any one to enter into; whereas religious conventicles are more private, and thereby give opportunity to clandeſtine machinations. I anſwer, that this is not ſtrictly true: for many civil aſſemblies are not open to every one. And if ſome religious meetings be private, who are they, I beſeech you, that are to be blamed for it? thoſe that deſire, or thoſe that forbid their being public? Again; you will ſay, that religious communion does exceedingly unite men's minds and affections to one another, and is therefore the more dangerous. But if this be ſo, why is not the magiſtrate afraid of his own church; and why does he not forbid

their assemblies, as things dangerous to his government? You will say, because he himself is a part, and even the head of them. As if he were not also a part of the commonwealth, and the head of the whole people.

Let us therefore deal plainly. The magistrate is afraid of other churches, but not of his own; because he is kind and favourable to the one, but severe and cruel to the other. These he treats like children, and indulges them even to wantonness. Those he uses as slaves; and how blamelessly soever they demean themselves, recompenses them no otherwise than by gallies, prisons, confiscations, and death. These he cherishes and defends: those he continually scourges and oppresses. Let him turn the tables: or let those dissenters enjoy but the same privileges in civils as his other subjects, and he will quickly find that these religious meetings will be no longer dangerous. For if men enter into seditious conspiracies, it is not religion inspires them to it in their meetings, but their sufferings and oppressions that make them willing to ease themselves. Just and moderate governments are every-where quiet, every-where safe. But oppression raises ferments, and makes men struggle to cast off an uneasy and tyrannical yoke. I know that seditions are very frequently raised upon pretence of religion. But it is as true, that, for religion, subjects are frequently ill treated, and live miserably. Believe me, the stirs that are made, proceed not from any peculiar temper of this or that church or religious society; but from the common disposition of all mankind, who when they groan under any heavy burthen, endeavour naturally to shake off the yoke that galls their necks. Suppose this business of religion were let alone, and that there were some other distinction made between men and men, upon account of their different complexions, shapes, and features, so that those who have black hair, for example, or gray eyes, should not enjoy the same privileges as other citizens; that they should not be permitted either to buy or sell, or live by their callings; that parents should not have the government and education of their own children; that

they ſhould either be excluded from the benefit of the laws, or meet with partial judges: can it be doubted but theſe perſons, thus diſtinguiſhed from others by the colour of their hair and eyes, and united together by one common perſecution, would be as dangerous to the magiſtrate, as any others that had aſſociated themſelves merely upon the account of religion? Some enter into company for trade and profit: others, for want of buſineſs, have their clubs for claret. Neighbourhood joins ſome, and religion others. But there is one thing only which gathers people into ſeditious commotions, and that is oppreſſion.

You will ſay; what, will you have people to meet at divine ſervice againſt the magiſtrate's will? I anſwer; why, I pray againſt his will? Is it not both lawful and neceſſary that they ſhould meet? Againſt his will, do you ſay? That is what I complain of. That is the very root of all the miſchief. Why are aſſemblies leſs ſufferable in a church than in a theatre or market? Thoſe that meet there are not either more vicious, or more turbulent, than thoſe that meet elſewhere. The buſineſs in that is, that they are ill uſed, and therefore they are not to be ſuffered. Take away the partiality that is uſed towards them in matters of common right; change the laws, take away the penalties unto which they are ſubjected, and all things will immediately become ſafe and peaceable: nay, thoſe that are averſe to the religion of the magiſtrate, will think themſelves ſo much the more bound to maintain the peace of the commonwealth, as their condition is better in that place than elſewhere; and all the ſeveral ſeparate congregations, like ſo many guardians of the public peace, will watch one another, that nothing may be innovated or changed in the form of the government: becauſe they can hope for nothing better than what they already enjoy; that is, an equal condition with their fellow-ſubjects, under a juſt and moderate government. Now if that church, which agrees in religion with the prince, be eſteemed the chief ſupport of any civil government, and that for no other reaſon, as has already been ſhown, than becauſe the prince is kind, and the laws are favourable

vourable to it; how much greater will be the ſecurity of a government, where all good ſubjects, of whatſoever they be, without any diſtinction upon account of religion, enjoying the ſame favour of the prince, and the ſame benefit of the laws, ſhall become the common ſupport and guard of it; and where none will have any occaſion to fear the ſeverity of the laws, but thoſe that do injuries to their neighbours, and offend againſt the civil peace!

That we may draw towards a concluſion. "The "ſum of all we drive at is, that every man enjoy the "ſame rights that are granted to others." Is it permitted to worſhip God in the Roman manner? Let it be permitted to do it in the Geneva form alſo. Is it permitted to ſpeak Latin in the market-place? Let thoſe that have a mind to it, be permitted to do it alſo in the church. Is it lawful for any man in his own houſe to kneel, ſtand, ſit, or uſe any other poſture; and cloath himſelf in white or black, in ſhort, or in long garments? Let it not be made unlawful to eat bread, drink wine, or waſh with water in the church. In a word: whatſoever things are left free by law in the common occaſions of life, let them remain free unto every church in divine worſhip. Let no man's life, or body, or houſe, or eſtate, ſuffer any manner of prejudice upon theſe accounts. Can you allow of the preſbyterian diſcipline? why ſhould not the epiſcopal alſo have what they like? Eccleſiaſtical authority, whether it be adminiſtered by the hands of a ſingle perſon, or many, is every-where the ſame; and neither has any juriſdiction in things civil, nor any manner of power of compulſion, nor any thing at all to do with riches and revenues.

Eccleſiaſtical aſſemblies and ſermons, are juſtified by daily experience, and public allowance. Theſe are allowed to people of ſome one perſuaſion: why not to all? If any thing paſs in a religious meeting ſeditiouſly, and contrary to the public peace, it is to be puniſhed in the ſame manner, and no otherwiſe, than as if it had happened in a fair or market. Theſe meetings ought not to be ſanctuaries of factious and flagitious fellows: nor ought it to be leſs lawful for men to meet in churches

than in halls: nor are one part of the subjects to be esteemed more blameable, for their meeting together than others. Every one is to be accountable for his own actions; and no man is to be laid under a suspicion, or odium, for the fault of another. Those that are seditious, murderers, thieves, robbers, adulterers, slanderers, &c. of whatsoever church, whether national or not, ought to be punished and suppressed. But those whose doctrine is peaceable, and whose manners are pure and blameless, ought to be upon equal terms with their fellow-subjects. Thus if solemn assemblies, observations of festivals, public worship, be permitted to any one sort of professors; all these things ought to be permitted to the presbyterians, independents, anabaptists, arminians, quakers, and others, with the same liberty. Nay, if we may openly speak the truth, and as becomes one man to another, neither pagan, nor mahometan, nor jew, ought to be excluded from the civil rights of the commonwealth, because of his religion. The gospel commands no such thing. The church, "which "judgeth not those that are without," 1 Cor. v. 11. wants it not. And the commonwealth, which embraces indifferently all men that are honest, peaceable, and industrious, requires it not. Shall we suffer a pagan to deal and trade with us, and shall we not suffer him to pray unto and worship God? If we allow the jews to have private houses and dwellings amongst us, why should we not allow them to have synagogues? Is their doctrine more false, their worship more abominable, or is the civil peace more endangered, by their meeting in public, than in their private houses? But if these things may be granted to jews and pagans, surely the condition of any christians ought not to be worse than theirs, in a christian commonwealth,

You will say, perhaps, yes, it ought to be: because they are more inclinable to factions, tumults, and civil wars. I answer: is this the fault of the christian religion? If it be so, truly the christian religion is the worst of all religions, and ought neither to be embraced by any particular person, nor tolerated by any commonwealth. For if this be the genius, this the nature of the

the chriſtian religion, to be turbulent, and deſtructive of the civil peace, that church itſelf which the magiſtrate indulges, will not always be innocent. But far be it from us to ſay any ſuch thing of that religion, which carries the greateſt oppoſition to covetouſneſs, ambition, diſcord, contention, and all manner of inordinate deſires; and is the moſt modeſt and peaceable religion that ever was. We muſt therefore ſeek another cauſe of thoſe evils that are charged upon religion. And if we conſider right, we ſhall find it conſiſt wholly in the ſubject that I am treating of. It is not the diverſity of opinions, which cannot be avoided; but the refuſal of toleration to thoſe that are of different opinions, which might have been granted, that has produced all the buſtles and wars, that have been in the chriſtian world, upon account of religion. The heads and leaders of the church, moved by avarice and inſatiable deſire of dominion, making uſe of the immoderate ambition of magiſtrates, and the credulous ſuperſtition of the giddy multitude, have incenſed and animated them againſt thoſe that diſſent from themſelves, by preaching unto them, contrary to the laws of the goſpel, and to the precepts of charity, that ſchiſmatics and heretics are to be outed of their poſſeſſions, and deſtroyed. And thus have they mixed together, and confounded two things, that are in themſelves moſt different, the church and the commonwealth. Now as it is very difficult for men patiently to ſuffer themſelves to be ſtript of the goods, which they have got by their honeſt induſtry; and contrary to all the laws of equity, both human and divine, to be delivered up for a prey to other men's violence and rapine; eſpecially when they are otherwiſe altogether blameleſs; and that the occaſion for which they are thus treated, does not at all belong to the juriſdiction of the magiſtrate, but intirely to the conſcience of every particular man; for the conduct of which he is accountable to God only; what elſe can be expected, but that theſe men, growing weary of the evils under which they labour, ſhould in the end think it lawful for them to reſiſt force with force, and to defend their natural rights, which are not forfeitable upon

account of religion, with arms as well as they can? That this has been hitherto the ordinary courſe of things, is abundantly evident in hiſtory: and that it will continue to be ſo hereafter, is but too apparent in reaſon. It cannot indeed be otherwiſe, ſo long as the principle of perſecution for religion ſhall prevail, as it has done hitherto, with magiſtrate and people; and ſo long as thoſe that ought to be the preachers of peace and concord, ſhall continue, with all their art and ſtrength, to excite men to arms, and ſound the trumpet of war. But that magiſtrates ſhould thus ſuffer theſe incendiaries, and diſturbers of the public peace, might juſtly be wondered at, if it did not appear that they have been invited by them unto a participation of the ſpoil, and have therefore thought fit to make uſe of their covetouſneſs and pride, as means whereby to increaſe their own power. For who does not ſee that theſe good men are indeed more miniſters of the government, than miniſters of the goſpel; and that by flattering the ambition, and favouring the dominion of princes and men in authority, they endeavour with all their might to promote that tyranny in the commonwealth, which otherwiſe they ſhould not be able to eſtabliſh in the church? This is the unhappy agreement that we ſee between the church and the ſtate. Whereas if each of them would contain itſelf within its own bounds, the one attending to the worldly welfare of the commonwealth, the other to the ſalvation of ſouls, it is impoſſible that any diſcord ſhould ever have happened between them. "Sed pudet hæc opprobria, &c." God Almighty grant, I beſeech him, that the goſpel of peace may at length be preached, and that civil magiſtrates, growing more careful to conform their own conſciences to the law of God, and leſs ſolicitous about the binding of other men's conſciences by human laws, may, like fathers of their country, direct all their counſels and endeavours to promote univerſally the civil welfare of all their children; except only of ſuch as are arrogant, ungovernable, and injurious to their brethren; and that all eccleſiaſtical men, who boaſt themſelves to be the ſucceſſors of the apoſtles, walking peaceably and

modeſtly in the apoſtles ſteps, without intermeddling with ſtate-affairs, may apply themſelves wholly to promote the ſalvation of ſouls. Farewel.

Perhaps it may not be amiſs to add a few things concerning hereſy and ſchiſm. A turk is not, nor can be either heretic or ſchiſmatic, to a chriſtian: and if any man fall off from the chriſtian faith to mahometiſm, he does not thereby become a heretic, or a ſchiſmatic, but an apoſtate and an infidel. This no-body doubts of. And by this it appears that men of different religions cannot be heretics or ſchiſmatics to one another.

We are to inquire therefore, what men are of the ſame religion. Concerning which, it is manifeſt that thoſe who have one and the ſame rule of faith and worſhip, are of the ſame religion, and thoſe who have not the ſame rule of faith and worſhip, are of different religions. For ſince all things that belong unto that religion are contained in that rule, it follows neceſſarily, that thoſe who agree in one rule are of one and the ſame religion: and vice verſâ. Thus turks and chriſtians are of different religions: becauſe theſe take the Holy Scriptures to be the rule of their religion, and thoſe the Koran. And for the ſame reaſon, there may be different religions alſo even amonſt chriſtians. The papiſts and the lutherans, though both of them profeſs faith in Chriſt, and are therefore called chriſtians, yet are not both of the ſame religion: becauſe theſe acknowledge nothing but the Holy Scriptures to be the rule and foundation of their religion; thoſe take in alſo traditions and decrees of popes, and of all theſe together make the rule of their religion. And thus the chriſtians of St. John, as they are called, and the chriſtians of Geneva, are of different religions: becauſe theſe alſo take only the ſcriptures; and thoſe, I know not what traditions; for the rule of their religion.

This being ſettled, it follows, Firſt, That hereſy is a ſeparation made in eccleſiaſtical communion between men of the ſame religion, for ſome opinions no way contained in the rule itſelf. And ſecondly, That amongſt thoſe who acknowledge nothing but the Holy Scriptures to be their rule of faith, hereſy is a ſeparation made in

their chriſtian communion, for opinions not contained in the expreſs words of ſcripture.

Now this ſeparation may be made in a twofold manner.

Firſt, When the greater part, or, by the magiſtrate's patronage, the ſtronger part, of the church ſeparates itſelf from others, by excluding them out of her communion, becauſe they will not profeſs their belief of certain opinions which are not to be found in the expreſs words of ſcripture. For it is not the paucity of thoſe that are ſeparated, nor the authority of the magiſtrate, that can make any man guilty of hereſy. But he only is an heretic who divides the church into parts, introduces names and marks of diſtinction, and voluntarily makes a ſeparation becauſe of ſuch opinions.

Secondly, When any one ſeparates himſelf from the communion of a church, becauſe that church does not publicly profeſs ſome certain opinions which the Holy Scriptures do not expreſly teach.

Both theſe are "heretics, becauſe they err in fundamentals, and they err obſtinately againſt knowledge." For when they have determined the Holy Scriptures to be the only foundation of faith, they nevertheleſs lay down certain propoſitions as fundamental, which are not in the ſcripture; and becauſe others will not acknowledge theſe additional opinions of theirs, nor build upon them as if they were neceſſary and fundamental, they therefore make a ſeparation in the church, either by withdrawing themſelves from the others, or expelling the others from them. Nor does it ſignify any thing for them to ſay that their confeſſions and ſymbols are agreeable to ſcripture, and to the analogy of faith. For if they be conceived in the expreſs words of ſcripture, there can be no queſtion about them; becauſe thoſe are acknowledged by all chriſtians to be of divine inſpiration, and therefore fundamental. But if they ſay that the articles which they require to be profeſſed, are conſequences deduced from the ſcripture; it is undoubtedly well done of them to believe and profeſs ſuch things as ſeem unto them ſo agreeable to the rule of faith: but it would be very ill done to obtrude thoſe things

things upon others, unto whom they do not ſeem to be the indubitable doctrines of the ſcripture. And to make a ſeparation for ſuch things as theſe, which neither are nor can be fundamental, is to become heretics. For I do not think there is any man arrived to that degree of madneſs, as that he dare give out his conſequences and interpretations of ſcripture as divine inſpirations, and compare the articles of faith that he has framed according to his own fancy, with the authority of the ſcripture. I know there are ſome propoſitions ſo evidently agreeable to ſcripture, that no-body can deny them to be drawn from thence: but about thoſe therefore there can be no difference. This only I ſay, that however clearly we may think this or the other doctrine to be deduced from ſcripture, we ought not therefore to impoſe it upon others, as a neceſſary article of faith, becauſe we believe it to be agreeable to the rule of faith; unleſs we would be content alſo that other doctrines ſhould be impoſed upon us in the ſame manner; and that we ſhould be compelled to receive and profeſs all the different and contradictory opinions of lutherans, calviniſts, remonſtrants, anabaptiſts, and other ſects, which the contrivers of ſymbols, ſyſtems, and confeſſions, are accuſtomed to deliver unto their followers as genuine and neceſſary deductions from the Holy Scripture. I cannot but wonder at the extravagant arrogance of thoſe men who think that they themſelves can explain things neceſſary to ſalvation more clearly than the Holy Ghoſt, the eternal and infinite wiſdom of God.

Thus much concerning hereſy; which word in common uſe is applied only to the doctrinal part of religion. Let us now conſider ſchiſm, which is a crime near a-kin to it. For both thoſe words ſeem unto me to ſignify an "ill-grounded ſeparation in eccleſiaſtical commu-"nion, made about things not neceſſary." But ſince uſe, which is the ſupreme law in matter of language, has determined that hereſy relates to errours in faith, and ſchiſm to thoſe in worſhip or diſcipline, we muſt conſider them under that diſtinction.

Schiſm

Schiſm then, for the ſame reaſons that have already been alleged, is nothing elſe but a ſeparation made in the communion of the church, upon account of ſomething in divine worſhip, or eccleſiaſtical diſcipline, that is not any neceſſary part of it. Now nothing in worſhip or diſcipline can be neceſſary to chriſtian communion, but what Chriſt our legiſlator, or the apoſtles, by inſpiration of the Holy Spirit, have commanded in expreſs words.

In a word: he that denies not any thing that the Holy Scriptures teach in expreſs words, nor makes a ſeparation upon occaſion of any thing that is not manifeſtly contained in the ſacred text; however he may be nick-named by any ſect of chriſtians, and declared by ſome, or all of them, to be utterly void of true chriſtianity; yet in deed and in truth this man cannot be either a heretic or ſchiſmatic.

Theſe things might have been explained more largely, and more advantageouſly; but it is enough to have hinted at them, thus briefly, to a perſon of your parts.

A SECOND

LETTER

CONCERNING

TOLERATION.

A SECOND

LETTER

CONCERNING

TOLERATION.

To the AUTHOR of the Argument of the LETTER, concerning TOLERATION, briefly conſidered and anſwered.

SIR,

YOU will pardon me if I take the ſame liberty with you, that you have done with the author of the Letter concerning Toleration; to conſider your arguments, and endeavour to ſhow you the miſtakes of them; for ſince you have ſo plainly yielded up the queſtion to him, and do own that "the ſeverities he would diſſuade "chriſtians from, are utterly unapt and improper to "bring

" bring men to embrace that truth which must save " them:" I am not without some hopes to prevail with you to do that yourself, which you say is the only justifiable aim of men differing about religion, even in the use of the severest methods, *viz.* carefully and impartially to weigh the whole matter, and thereby to remove that prejudice which makes you yet favour some remains of persecution: promising myself that so ingenious a person will either be convinced by the truth which appears so very clear and evident to me: or else confess, that, were either you or I in authority, we should very unreasonably and very unjustly use any force upon the other, which differed from him, upon any pretence of want of examination. And if force be not to be used in your case or mine, because unreasonable, or unjust; you will, I hope, think fit that it should be forborn in all others, where it will be equally unjust and unreasonable; as I doubt not but to make it appear it will unavoidably be, wherever you will go about to punish men for want of consideration; for the true way to try such speculations as these, is to see how they will prove when they are reduced into practice.

The first thing you seem startled at, in the author's letter, is the largeness of the toleration he proposes: and you think it strange that he would not have so much as a " pagan, mahometan, or jew, excluded from the " civil rights of the commonwealth, because of his re- " ligion," p. 1. We pray every day for their conversion, and I think it our duty so to do: but it will, I fear, hardly be believed that we pray in earnest, if we exclude them from the other ordinary and probable means of conversion; either by driving them from, or persecuting them when they are amongst us. Force, you allow, is improper to convert men to any religion. Toleration is but the removing that force; so that why those should not be tolerated as well as others, if you wish their conversion, I do not see. But you say, " It seems " hard to conceive how the author of that letter should " think to do any service to religion in general, or to " the christian religion, by recommending and persuad- " ing such a toleration; for how much soever it may

" tend

" tend to the advancement of trade and commerce, " (which ſome ſeem to place above all other conſidera- " tions) I ſee no reaſon, from any experiment that has " been made, to expect that true religion would be a " gainer by it; that it would be either the better pre- " ſerved, the more widely propagated, or rendered any " whit the more fruitful in the lives of its profeſſors by " it." Before I come to your doubt itſelf, " Whether " true religion would be a gainer by ſuch a toleration;" give me leave to take notice, that if, by other conſide- rations, you mean any thing but religion, your paren- theſis is wholly beſide the matter; and that if you do not know that the author of the letter places the ad- vancement of trade above religion, your inſinuation is very uncharitable. But I go on.

" You ſee no reaſon, you ſay, from any experiment " that has been made, to expect that true religion would " be a gainer by it." True religion and chriſtian re- ligion are, I ſuppoſe, to you and me, the ſame thing. But of this you have an experiment in its firſt appear- ance in the world, and ſeveral hundreds of years after. It was then " better preſerved, more widely propagat- " ed, in proportion, and rendered more fruitful in the " lives of its profeſſors," than ever ſince; though then jews and pagans were tolerated, and more than tolerated by the governments of thoſe places where it grew up. I hope you do not imagine the chriſtian religion has loſt any of its firſt beauty, force, or reaſonableneſs, by having been almoſt two thouſand years in the world; that you ſhould fear it ſhould be leſs able now to ſhift for itſelf, without the help of force. I doubt not but you look upon it ſtill to be " the power and wiſdom of " God for our ſalvation;" and therefore cannot ſuſpect it leſs capable to prevail now, by its own truth and light, than it did in the firſt ages of the church, when poor contemptible men, without authority, or the coun- tenance of authority, had alone the care of it. This, as I take it, has been made uſe of by chriſtians gene- rally, and by ſome of our church in particular, as an argument for the truth of the chriſtian religion; that it

grew

grew, and ſpread, and prevailed, without any aid from force, or the aſſiſtance of the powers in being; and if it be a mark of the true religion, that it will prevail by its own light and ſtrength, but that falſe religions will not, but have need of force and foreign helps to ſupport them, nothing certainly can be more for the advantage of true religion, than to take away compulſion every where; and therefore it is no more "hard to conceive how the author of the letter ſhould think to do "ſervice to religion in general, or to the chriſtian religion," than it is hard to conceive that he ſhould think there is a true religion, and that the chriſtian religion is it; which its profeſſors have always owned not to need force, and have urged that as a good argument to prove the truth of it. The inventions of men in religion need the force and helps of men to ſupport them. A religion that is of God wants not the aſſiſtance of human authority to make it prevail. I gueſs, when this dropped from you, you had narrowed your thoughts to your own age and country: but if you will enlarge them a little beyond the confines of England, I do not doubt but you will eaſily imagine that if in Italy, Spain, Portugal, &c. the inquiſition; and in France their dragooning; and in other parts thoſe ſeverities that are uſed to keep or force men to the national religion; were taken away; and inſtead thereof the toleration propoſed by the author were ſet up, the true religion would be a gainer by it.

The author of the letter ſays, "Truth would do "well enough, if ſhe were once left to ſhift for herſelf. "She ſeldom hath received, and he fears never will re-"ceive, much aſſiſtance from the power of great men, "to whom ſhe is but rarely known, and more rarely "welcome. Errors indeed prevail, by the aſſiſtance of "foreign and borrowed ſuccours. Truth makes way "into our underſtanding, by her own light, and is but "the weaker for any borrowed force that violence can "add to her." Theſe words of his, how hard ſoever they may ſeem to you, may help you to conceive how he ſhould think to do ſervice to true religion, by recommending

commending and perſuading ſuch a toleration as he propoſed. And now pray tell me yourſelf, whether you do not think true religion would be a gainer by it, if ſuch a toleration, eſtabliſhed there, would permit the doctrine of the church of England to be freely preached, and its worſhip ſet up, in any popiſh, mahometan, or pagan country? If you do not, you have a very ill opinion of the religion of the church of England, and muſt own that it can only be propagated and ſupported by force. If you think it would gain in thoſe countries, by ſuch a toleration, you are then of the author's mind, and do not find it ſo hard to conceive how the recommending ſuch a toleration might do ſervice to that which you think true religion. But if you allow ſuch a toleration uſeful to truth in other countries, you muſt find ſomething very peculiar in the air, that muſt make it leſs uſeful to truth in England; and it will ſavour of much partiality, and be too abſurd, I fear, for you to own, that toleration will be advantageous to true religion all the world over, except only in this iſland; though, I much ſuſpect, this, as abſurd as it is, lies at the bottom; and you build all you ſay, upon this lurking ſuppoſition, that the national religion now in England, backed by the public authority of the law, is the only true religion, and therefore no other is to be tolerated; which being a ſuppoſition equally unavoidable, and equally juſt in other countries, unleſs we can imagine that every where but in England men believe what at the ſame time they think to be a lie; will in other places exclude toleration, and thereby hinder truth from the means of propagating itſelf.

What the fruits of toleration are, which in the next words you complain do "remain ſtill among us," and which, you ſay, "give no encouragement to hope for "any advantages from it;" what fruits, I ſay, theſe are, or whether they are owing to the want or wideneſs of toleration among us, we ſhall then be able to judge, when you tell us what they are. In the mean time I will boldly ſay, that if the magiſtrates will ſeverely and impartially ſet themſelves againſt vice, in whomſoever

it is found, and leave men to their own conſciences, in their articles of faith, and ways of worſhip, "true religion will be ſpread wider, and be more fruitful in "the lives of its profeſſors," than ever hitherto it has been, by the impoſition of creeds and ceremonies.

You tell us, "that no man can fail of finding the "way of ſalvation, who ſeeks it as he ought." I wonder you had not taken notice, in the places you quote for this, how we are directed there to the right way of ſeeking. The words, John vii. 17. are, "If any man "will do his will, he ſhall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." And Pſalm xxv. 9, 12, 14, which are alſo quoted by you, tell us, "The meek will he "guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his "way. What man is he that feareth the Lord, him "ſhall he teach in the way that he ſhall chooſe. The "ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he "will ſhow them his covenant." So that theſe places, if they prove what you cite them for, "that no man "can fail of finding the way of ſalvation, who ſeeks it "as he ought;" they do alſo prove, that a good life is the only way to ſeek as we ought; and that therefore the magiſtrates, if they would put men upon ſeeking the way of ſalvation as they ought, ſhould, by their laws and penalties, force them to a good life; a good converſation being the readieſt and ſureſt way to a right underſtanding. Puniſhments and ſeverities thus applied, we are ſure, are both practicable, juſt, and uſeful. How puniſhments will prove in the way you contend for, we ſhall ſee when we come to conſider it.

Having given us theſe broad marks of your goodwill to toleration, you tell us, "It is not your deſign "to argue againſt it, but only to inquire what our au"thor offers for the proof of his aſſertion." And then you give us this ſcheme of his argument.

1. "There is but one way of ſalvation, or but one "true religion.

2. "No man can be ſaved by this religion, who does "not believe it to be the true religion.

 3. "This

3. " This belief is to be wrought in men by reaſon " and argument, not by outward force and compul- " ſion.

4. " Therefore all ſuch force is utterly of no uſe for " the promoting true religion, and the ſalvation of " ſouls.

5. " And therefore no-body can have any right to " uſe any force or compulſion, for the bringing men " to the true religion."

And you tell us, " the whole ſtrength of what that " letter urged for the purpoſe of it, lies in this argu- " ment," which I think you have no more reaſon to ſay, than if you ſhould tell us, that only one beam of a houſe had any ſtrength in it, when there are ſeveral others that would ſupport the building, were that gone.

The purpoſe of the letter is plainly to defend toleration, exempt from all force; eſpecially civil force, or the force of the magiſtrate. Now if it be a true conſequence " that men muſt be tolerated, if magiſtrates " have no commiſſion or authority to puniſh them for " matters of religion;" then the only ſtrength of that letter lies not in the unfitneſs of force to convince men's underſtanding. See letter, p. 381.

Again; if it be true that " magiſtrates being as liable " to errour as the reſt of mankind, their uſing of force " in matters of religion, would not at all advance the " ſalvation of mankind," allowing that even force could work upon them, and magiſtrates had authority to uſe it in religion, then the argument you mention is not " the only one in that letter, of ſtrength to prove the " neceſſity of toleration." See letter, p. 319. For the argument of the unfitneſs of force to convince men's minds being quite taken away, either of the other would be a ſtrong proof for toleration. But let us conſider the argument as you have put it.

" The two firſt propoſitions, you ſay, you agree to." As to the third, you grant " that force is very impro- " per to be uſed to induce the mind to aſſent to any " truth." But yet you deny, " that force is utterly " uſeleſs for the promoting true religion, and the ſal- " vation of men's ſouls;" which you call the author's

fourth propoſition; but indeed that is not the author's fourth propoſition, or any propoſition of his, to be found in the pages you quote, or any where elſe in the whole letter, either in thoſe terms, or in the ſenſe you take it. In page 319, which you quote, the author is ſhowing that the magiſtrate has no power, that is, no right, to make uſe of force in matters of religion, for the ſalvation of men's ſouls. And the reaſon he gives for it there, is, becauſe force has no efficacy to convince men's minds; and that without a full perſuaſion of the mind, the profeſſion of the true religion itſelf is not acceptable to God. "Upon this ground, ſays he, I affirm "that the magiſtrate's power extends not to the eſta- "bliſhing any articles of faith, or forms of worſhip, "by the force of his laws. For laws are of no force "at all without penalties; and penalties in this caſe are "abſolutely impertinent, becauſe they are not proper "to convince the mind." And ſo again, p. 331, which is the other place you quote, the author ſays: "Whatſoever may be doubted in religion, yet this at leaſt is "certain, that no religion which I believe not to be "true, can be either true, or profitable unto me. In "vain therefore do princes compel their ſubjects to "come into their church-communion, under the pre- "tence of ſaving their ſouls." And more to this purpoſe. But in neither of thoſe paſſages, nor any-where elſe, that I remember, does the author ſay that it is impoſſible that force ſhould any way, at any time, upon any perſon, by any accident, be uſeful towards the promoting of true religion, and the ſalvation of ſouls; for that is it which you mean by "utterly of no uſe." He does not deny that there is any thing which God in his goodneſs does not, or may not, ſometimes graciouſly make uſe of, towards the ſalvation of men's ſouls; as our Saviour did of clay and ſpittle to cure blindneſs; and that ſo force alſo may be ſometimes uſeful. But that which he denies, and you grant, is, that force has any proper efficacy to enlighten the underſtanding, or produce belief. And from thence he infers, that therefore the magiſtrate cannot lawfully compel men in matters of religion. This is what the author ſays, and what

what I imagine will always hold true, whatever you or any one can ſay or think to the contrary.

That which you ſay is, "Force indirectly and at a "diſtance may do ſome ſervice." What you mean by doing ſervice at a diſtance, towards the bringing men to ſalvation, or to embrace the truth, I confeſs I do not underſtand; unleſs perhaps it be what others, in propriety of ſpeech, call by accident. But be it what it will, it is ſuch a ſervice as cannot be aſcribed to the direct and proper efficacy of force. And ſo, ſay you, "Force, indirectly, and at a diſtance, may do ſome "ſervice." I grant it: make your beſt of it. What do you conclude from thence, to your purpoſe? That therefore the magiſtrate may make uſe of it? That I deny, that ſuch an indirect, and at a diſtance uſefulneſs, will authorize the civil power in the uſe of it, that will never be proved. Loſs of eſtate and dignities may make a proud man humble: ſufferings and impriſonment may make a wild and debauched man ſober: and ſo theſe things may "indirectly, and at a diſ- "tance, be ſerviceable towards the ſalvation of men's "ſouls." I doubt not but God has made ſome, or all of theſe, the occaſions of good to many men. But will you therefore infer, that the magiſtrate may take away a man's honour, or eſtate, or liberty, for the ſalvation of his ſoul; or torment him in this, that he may be happy in the other world? What is otherwiſe unlawful in itſelf, as it certainly is to puniſh a man without a fault; can never be made lawful by ſome good that, indirectly and at a diſtance, or, if you pleaſe, indirectly and by accident, may follow from it. Running a man through, may ſave his life, as it has done by chance, opening a lurking impoſthume. But will you ſay therefore, that this is lawful, juſtifiable chirurgery? The gallies, it is like, might reduce many a vain, looſe proteſtant to repentance, ſobriety of thought, and a true ſenſe of religion: and the torments they ſuffered in the late perſecution, might make ſeveral conſider the pains of hell, and put a due eſtimate of vanity and contempt on all things of this world. But will you ſay, becauſe thoſe puniſhments might, indirectly and at a diſtance, ſerve

to the ſalvation of men's ſouls, that therefore the king of France had right authority to make uſe of them? If your indirect and at a diſtance ſerviceableneſs may authorize the magiſtrate to uſe force in religion, all the cruelties uſed by the heathens againſt chriſtians, by papiſts againſt proteſtants, and all the perſecuting of chriſtians one among another, are all juſtifiable.

But what if I ſhould tell you now of other effects, contrary effects, that puniſhments in matters of religion may produce; and ſo may ſerve to keep men from the truth and from ſalvation? What then will become of your indirect and at a diſtance uſefulneſs? For in all pleas for any thing becauſe of its uſefulneſs, it is not enough to ſay as you do, and is the utmoſt that can be ſaid for it, that it may be ſerviceable: but it muſt be conſidered not only what it may, but what it is likely to produce: and the greater good or harm like to come from it, ought to determine the uſe of it. To ſhow you what effects one may expect from force, of what uſefulneſs it is to bring men to embrace the truth, be pleaſed to read what you yourſelf have writ: "I cannot but remark, ſay you, that theſe methods (viz. depriving men of eſtates, corporal puniſhment, ſtarving and tormenting them in priſons, and in the end even taking away their lives, to make them chriſtians) are ſo very improper in reſpect to the deſign of them, that they uſually produce the quite contrary effect. For whereas all the uſe which force can have for the advancing true religion, and the ſalvation of ſouls, is (as has already been ſhowed) by diſpoſing men to ſubmit to inſtruction, and to give a fair hearing to the reaſons which are offered for the enlightening their minds, and diſcovering the truth to them; theſe cruelties have the misfortune to be commonly looked upon as ſo juſt a prejudice againſt any religion that uſes them, as makes it needleſs to look any farther into it: and to tempt men to reject it, as both falſe and deteſtable, without ever vouchſafing to conſider the rational grounds and motives of it. This effect they ſeldom fail to work upon the ſufferers of them. And as to the ſpectators, if they be

" be not beforehand well inſtructed in thoſe grounds " and motives, they will be much tempted likewiſe, " not only to entertain the ſame opinion of ſuch a re- " ligion, but withal to judge much more favourably " of that of the ſufferers; who, they will be apt to " think, would not expoſe themſelves to ſuch extre- " mities, which they might avoid by compliance, if " they were not thoroughly ſatisfied of the juſtice of " their cauſe." Here then you allow that taking away men's eſtates, or liberty, and corporal puniſhments, are apt to drive away both ſufferers and ſpectators from the religion that makes uſe of them, rather than to it. And ſo theſe you renounce. Now if you give up puniſhments of a man, in his perſon, liberty, and eſtate, I think we need not ſtand with you, for any other puniſhments that may be made uſe of. But, by what follows, it ſeems you ſhelter yourſelf under the name of ſeverities. For moderate puniſhments, as you call them in another place, you think may be ſerviceable; indirectly, and at a diſtance ſerviceable, to bring men to the truth. And I ſay, any ſort of puniſhments diſproportioned to the offence, or where there is no fault at all, will always be ſeverity, unjuſtifiable ſeverity, and will be thought ſo by the ſufferers and by-ſtanders; and ſo will uſually produce the effects you have mentioned, contrary to the deſign they are uſed for. Not to profeſs the national faith, whilſt one believes it not to be true; not to enter into church-communion with the magiſtrate as long as one judges the doctrine there profeſſed to be erroneous, or the worſhip not ſuch as God has either preſcribed, or will accept; this you allow, and all the world with you muſt allow, not to be a fault. But yet you would have men puniſhed for not being of the national religion; that is, as you yourſelf confeſs, for no fault at all. Whether this be not ſeverity, nay ſo open and avowed injuſtice, that it will give men a juſt prejudice againſt the religion that uſes it, and produce all thoſe ill effects you there mention, I leave you to conſider. So that the name of ſeverities, in oppoſition to the moderate puniſhments you ſpeak for, can do you no ſervice at all. For where there is no fault, there can be no moderate puniſhment: all puniſhment is im-

moderate, where there is no fault to be punished. But of your moderate punishment we shall have occasion to speak more in another place. It suffices here to have shown, that, whatever punishments you use, they are as likely to drive men from the religion that uses them, as to bring them to the truth; and much more likely, as we shall see before we have done: and so by your own confession they are not to be used.

One thing in this passage of the author, it seems, appears absurd to you; that he should say, "That to take "away men's lives, to make them christians, was but "an ill way of expressing a design of their salvation." I grant there is great absurdity somewhere in the case. But it is in the practice of those who, persecuting men under a pretence of bringing them to salvation, suffer the temper of their good-will to betray itself, in taking away their lives. And whatever absurdities there be in this way of proceeding, there is none in the author's way of expressing it; as you would more plainly have seen, if you had looked into the Latin original, where the words are, "Vitâ denique ipsâ privant, ut "fideles, ut salvi fiant;" which, though more literally, might be thus rendered, "To bring them to the faith "and to salvation;" yet the translator is not to be blamed, if he chose to express the sense of the author, in words that very livelily represented the extreme absurdity they are guilty of, who, under pretence of zeal for the salvation of souls, proceed to the taking away their lives. An example whereof we have in a neighbouring country, where the prince declares he will have all his dissenting subjects saved, and pursuant thereunto has taken away the lives of many of them. For thither at last persecution must come: as I fear, notwithstand your talk of moderate punishments, you yourself intimate in these words: "Not that I think the sword "is to be used in this business, (as I have sufficiently "declared already) but because all coactive power re-"solves at last into the sword; since all (I do not say, "that will not be reformed in this matter by lesser pe-"nalties, but) that refuse to submit to lesser penalties, "must at last fall under the stroke of it." In which words,

words, if you mean any thing to the buſineſs in hand, you ſeem to have a reſerve for greater puniſhments, when leſſer are not ſufficient to bring men to be convinced. But let that paſs.

You ſay, "If force be uſed, not inſtead of reaſon "and arguments, that is, not to convince by its own "proper efficacy, which it cannot do," &c. I think thoſe who make laws, and uſe force, to bring men to church-conformity in religion, ſeek only the compliance, but concern themſelves not for the conviction of thoſe they puniſh; and ſo never uſe force to convince. For, pray tell me, when any diſſenter conforms, and enters into the church-communion, is he ever examined to ſee whether he does it upon reaſon, and conviction, and ſuch grounds as would become a chriſtian concerned for religion? If perſecution, as is pretended, were for the ſalvation of men's ſouls, this would be done; and men not driven to take the ſacrament to keep their places, or to obtain licences to ſell ale, for ſo low have theſe holy things been proſtituted; who perhaps knew nothing of its inſtitution, and conſidered no other uſe of it but the ſecuring ſome poor ſecular advantage, which without taking of it they ſhould have loſt. So that this exception of yours, of the "uſe of force, inſtead of "arguments, to convince men," I think is needleſs; thoſe who uſe it, not being, that ever I heard, concerned that men ſhould be convinced.

But you go on in telling us your way of uſing force, "only to bring men to conſider thoſe reaſons and ar-"guments, which are proper and ſufficient to con-"vince them; but which, without being forced, they "would not conſider." And, ſay you, "who can deny "but that, indirectly and at a diſtance, it does ſome "ſervice, towards bringing men to embrace that truth, "which either through negligence they would never "acquaint themſelves with, or through prejudice they "would reject and condemn unheard?" Whether this way of puniſhment is like to increaſe, or remove prejudice, we have already ſeen. And what that truth is, which you can poſitively ſay any man, "without being "forced by puniſhment, would through careleſſneſs "never

" never acquaint himſelf with," I deſire you to name. Some are called at the third, ſome at the ninth, and ſome at the eleventh hour. And whenever they are called, they embrace all the truth neceſſary to ſalvation. But theſe ſlips may be forgiven, amongſt ſo many groſs and palpable miſtakes, as appear to me all through your diſcourſe. For example: you tell us that " force uſed " to bring men to conſider, does, indirectly, and at a " diſtance, ſome ſervice." Here now you walk in the dark, and endeavour to cover yourſelf with obſcurity, by omitting two neceſſary parts. As firſt, who muſt uſe this force: which, though you tell us not here, yet by other parts of your treatiſe it is plain you mean the magiſtrate. And, ſecondly, you omit to ſay upon whom it muſt be uſed, who it is muſt be puniſhed: and thoſe, if you ſay any thing to your purpoſe, muſt be diſſenters from the national religion, thoſe who come not into church-communion with the magiſtrate. And then your propoſition, in fair plain terms, will ſtand thus: " If " the magiſtrate puniſh diſſenters, only to bring them " to conſider thoſe reaſons and arguments which are " proper to convince them; who can deny but that, " indirectly and at a diſtance, it may do ſervice, &c. " towards bringing men to embrace that truth which " otherwiſe they would never be acquainted with?" &c. In which propoſition, 1. There is ſomething impracticable. 2. Something unjuſt. And, 3. Whatever efficacy there is in force, your way applied, to bring men to conſider and be convinced, it makes againſt you.

1. It is impracticable to puniſh diſſenters, as diſſenters, only to make them conſider. For if you puniſh them as diſſenters, as certainly you do, if you puniſh them alone, and them all without exception, you puniſh them for not being of the national religion. And to puniſh a man for not being of the national religion, is not to puniſh him only to make him conſider; unleſs not to be of the national religion, and not to conſider, be the ſame thing. But you will ſay, the deſign is only to make diſſenters conſider; and therefore they may be puniſhed only to make them conſider. To this

I re-

I reply; it is impoſſible you ſhould puniſh one with a deſign only to make him conſider, whom you puniſh for ſomething elſe beſides want of conſideration; or if you puniſh him whether he conſider or no; as you do, if you lay penalties on diſſenters in general. If you ſhould make a law to puniſh all ſtammerers; could any one believe you, if you ſaid it was deſigned only to make them leave ſwearing? Would not every one ſee it was impoſſible that puniſhment ſhould be only againſt ſwearing, when all ſtammerers were under the penalty? Such a propoſal as this is, in itſelf, at firſt ſight monſtrouſly abſurd. But you muſt thank yourſelf for it. For to lay penalties upon ſtammerers, only to make them not ſwear, is not more abſurd and impoſſible than it is to lay penalties upon diſſenters only to make them conſider.

2. To puniſh men out of the communion of the national church, to make them conſider, is unjuſt. They are puniſhed, becauſe out of the national church: and they are out of the national church, becauſe they are not yet convinced. Their ſtanding out therefore in this ſtate, whilſt they are not convinced, not ſatisfied in their minds, is no fault; and therefore cannot juſtly be puniſhed. But your method is, "Puniſh them, to make "them conſider ſuch reaſons and arguments as are pro-"per to convince them." Which is juſt ſuch juſtice, as it would be for the magiſtrate to puniſh you for not being a carteſian, "only to bring you to conſider ſuch "reaſons and arguments as are proper and ſufficient to "convince you:" when it is poſſible, 1. That you, being ſatisfied of the truth of your own opinion in philoſophy, did not judge it worth while to conſider that of Des Cartes. 2. It is poſſible you are not able to conſider and examine all the proofs and grounds upon which he endeavours to eſtabliſh his philoſophy. 3. Poſſibly you have examined, and can find no reaſons and arguments proper and ſufficient to convince you.

3. Whatever indirect efficacy there be in force, applied by the magiſtrate your way, it makes againſt you. "Force uſed by the magiſtrate to bring men to con-"ſider thoſe reaſons and arguments, which are proper

"and

" and ſufficient to convince them, but which without " being forced they would not conſider; may, ſay you, " be ſerviceable, indirectly and at a diſtance, to make " men embrace the truth which muſt ſave them." And thus, ſay I, it may be ſerviceable to bring men to receive and embrace falſhood, which will deſtroy them. So that force and puniſhment, by your own confeſſion, not being able directly, by its proper efficacy, to do men any good, in reference to their future eſtate; though it be ſure directly to do them harm, in reference to their preſent condition here; and indirectly, and in your way of applying it, being proper to do at leaſt as much harm as good; I deſire to know what the uſefulneſs is which ſo much recommends it, even to a degree that you pretend it needful and neceſſary. Had you ſome new untried chymical preparation, that was as proper to kill as to ſave an infirm man, of whoſe life I hope you would not be more tender than of a weak brother's ſoul; would you give it your child, or try it upon your friend, or recommend it to the world for its rare uſefulneſs? I deal very favourably with you, when I ſay as proper to kill as to ſave. For force, in your indirect way, of the magiſtrate's " applying to make men con- " ſider thoſe arguments that otherwiſe they would not; " to make them lend an ear to thoſe who tell them " they have miſtaken their way, and offer to ſhow them " the right;" I ſay, in this way, force is much more proper, and likely, to make men receive and embrace errour than the truth.

1. Becauſe men out of the right way are as apt, I think I may ſay, apter to uſe force, than others. For truth, I mean the truth of the Goſpel, which is that of the true religion, is mild, and gentle, and meek, and apter to uſe prayers and intreaties, than force, to gain a hearing.

2. Becauſe the magiſtrates of the world, or the civil ſovereigns, as you think it more proper to call them, being few of them in the right way; not one of ten, take which ſide you will, perhaps you will grant not one of an hundred, being of the true religion; it is likely your indirect way of uſing of force would do an hundred,

hundred, or at leaſt ten times as much harm as good; eſpecially if you conſider, that as the magiſtrate will certainly uſe it to force men to hearken to the proper miniſters of his religion, let it be what it will: ſo you having ſet no time, nor bounds, to this conſideration of arguments and reaſons, ſhort of being convinced; you, under another pretence, put into the magiſtrate's hands as much power to force men to his religion, as any the openeſt perſecutors can pretend to. For what difference, I beſeech you, between puniſhing you to bring you to maſs, and puniſhing you to conſider thoſe reaſons and arguments which are proper and ſufficient to convince you that you ought to go to maſs? For till you are brought to conſider reaſons and arguments proper and ſufficient to convince you; that is, till you are convinced; you are puniſhed on. If you reply, you meant reaſons and arguments proper and ſufficient to convince them of the truth. I anſwer, if you meant ſo, why did you not ſay ſo? But if you had, it would in this caſe do you little ſervive. For the maſs, in France, is as much ſuppoſed the truth, as the liturgy here. And your way of applying force will as much promote popery in France, as proteſtantiſm in England. And ſo you ſee how ſerviceable it is to make men receive and embrace the truth that muſt ſave them.

However you tell us, in the ſame page, that "if "force ſo applied, as is above-mentioned, may in ſuch "ſort as has been ſaid, i. e. indirectly and at a diſ-"tance, be ſerviceable to bring men to receive and "embrace truth, you think it ſufficient to ſhow the "uſefulneſs of it in religion:" where I ſhall obſerve, 1. That this uſefulneſs amounts to no more but this, that it is not impoſſible but that it may be uſeful. And ſuch an uſefulneſs one cannot deny to auricular confeſſion, doing of penance, going of a pilgrimage to ſome ſaint, and what not. Yet our church does not think fit to uſe them: though it cannot be denied, but they may have ſome of your indirect and at a diſtance uſefulneſs; that is, perhaps may do ſome ſervice indirectly and by accident.

2. Force,

2. Force, your way applied, as it may be uſeful, ſo alſo it may be uſeleſs. For, 1. Where the law puniſhes diſſenters, without telling them it is to make them conſider, they may through ignorance and overſight neglect to do it, and ſo your force proves uſeleſs. 2. Some diſſenters may have conſidered already, and then force employed upon them muſt needs be uſeleſs: unleſs you can think it uſeful to puniſh a man to make him do that which he has done already. 3. God has not directed it: and therefore we have no reaſon to expect he ſhould make it ſucceſsful.

3. It may be hurtful: nay, it is likely to prove more hurtful than uſeful. 1. Becauſe to puniſh men for that, which it is viſible cannot be known whether they have performed or no, is ſo palpable an injuſtice, that it is likelier to give them an averſion to the perſons, and religion that uſes it, than to bring them to it. 2. Becauſe the greateſt part of mankind, being not able to diſcern betwixt truth and falſhood, that depend upon long and many proofs, and remote conſequences; nor having ability enough to diſcover the falſe grounds, and reſiſt the captious and fallacious arguments of learned men verſed in controverſies; are ſo much more expoſed, by the force which is uſed to make them hearken to the information and inſtruction of men appointed to it by the magiſtrate, or thoſe of his religion, to be led into falſhood and errour, than they are likely this way to be brought to embrace the truth that muſt ſave them; by how much the national religions of the world are, beyond compariſon, more of them falſe or erroneous, than ſuch as have God for their author, and truth for their ſtandard. And that ſeeking and examining, without the ſpecial grace of God, will not ſecure even knowing and learned men from errour; we have a famous inſtance in the two Reynolds's, both ſcholars and brothers, but one a proteſtant, the other a papiſt, who, upon the exchange of papers between them, were both turned; but ſo that neither of them, with all the arguments he could uſe, could bring his brother back to the religion which he himſelf had found reaſon to embrace.

Here

Here was ability to examine and judge, beyond the ordinary rate of moſt men. Yet one of theſe brothers was ſo caught by the ſophiſtry and ſkill of the other, that he was brought into errour, from which he could never again be extricated. This we muſt unavoidably conclude; unleſs we can think, that wherein they differed, they were both in the right; or that truth can be an argument to ſupport a falſhood; both which are impoſſible. And now, I pray, which of theſe two brothers would you have puniſhed, to make him bethink himſelf, and bring him back to the truth? For it is certain ſome ill-grounded cauſe of aſſent alienated one of them from it. If you will examine your principles, you will find that according to your rule, the papiſt muſt be puniſhed in England, and the proteſtant in Italy. So that, in effect, by your rule, paſſion, humour, prejudice, luſt, impreſſions of education, admiration of perſons, worldly reſpect, and the like incompetent motives, muſt always be ſuppoſed on that ſide on which the magiſtrate is not.

I have taken the pains here, in a ſhort recapitulation, to give you the view of the uſefulneſs of force, your way applied, which you make ſuch a noiſe with, and lay ſo much ſtreſs on. Whereby I doubt not but it is viſible, that its uſefulneſs and uſeleſſneſs laid in the balance againſt each other, the pretended uſefulneſs is ſo far from outweighing, that it can neither encourage nor excuſe the uſing of puniſhments; which are not lawful to be uſed in our caſe without ſtrong probability of ſucceſs. But when to its uſeleſſneſs miſchief is added, and it is evident that more, much more, harm may be expected from it than good; your own argument returns upon you. For if it be reaſonable to uſe it, becauſe it may be ſerviceable to promote true religion, and the ſalvation of ſouls; it is much more reaſonable to let it alone, if it may be more ſerviceable to the promoting falſhood, and the perdition of ſouls. And therefore you will do well hereafter not to build ſo much on the uſefulneſs of force, applied your way, your indirect and at a diſtance uſefulneſs, which amounts but to the ſhadow and poſſibility of uſefulneſs, but with an overbalancing

balancing weight of miſchief and harm annexed to it. For upon a juſt eſtimate, this indirect, and at a diſtance, uſefulneſs, can directly go for nothing; or rather leſs than nothing.

But ſuppoſe force, applied your way, were as uſeful for the promoting true religion, as I ſuppoſe I have ſhowed it to be the contrary; it does not from hence follow that it is lawful and may be uſed. It may be very uſeful in a pariſh that has no teacher, or as bad as none, that a lay-man who wanted not abilities for it, for ſuch we may ſuppoſe to be, ſhould ſometimes preach to them the doctrine of the goſpel, and ſtir them up to the duties of a good life. And yet this, (which cannot be denied, may be at leaſt "indirectly, and at a "diſtance, ſerviceable towards the promoting true re-"ligion, and the ſalvation of ſouls,") you will not, I imagine, allow, for this uſefulneſs, to be lawful: and that, becauſe he has not commiſſion and authority to do it. The ſame might be ſaid of the adminiſtration of the ſacraments, and any other function of the prieſtly office. This is juſt our caſe. Granting force, as you ſay, indirectly and at a diſtance, uſeful to the ſalvation of men's ſouls; yet it does not therefore follow that it is lawful for the magiſtrate to uſe it: becauſe, as the author ſays, the magiſtrate has no commiſſion or authority to do ſo. For however you have put it thus, as you have framed the author's argument, "force is ut-"terly of no uſe for the promoting of true religion, "and the ſalvation of ſouls; and therefore no-body "can have any right to uſe any force or compulſion for "the bringing men to the true religion;" yet the author does not, in thoſe pages you quote, make the latter of theſe propoſitions an inference barely from the former; but makes uſe of it as a truth proved by ſeveral arguments he had before brought to that purpoſe. For though it be a good argument; it is not uſeful, therefore not fit to be uſed: yet this will not be good logic; it is uſeful, therefore any one has a right to uſe it. For if the uſefulneſs makes it lawful, it makes it lawful in any hands that can ſo apply it; and ſo private men may uſe it.

" Who can deny, ſay you, but that force, indirectly " and at a diſtance, may do ſome ſervice towards the " bringing men to embrace that truth, which otherwiſe " they would never acquaint themſelves with?" If this be good arguing in you, for the uſefulneſs of force towards the ſaving of men's ſouls; give me leave to argue after the ſame faſhion. 1. I will ſuppoſe, which you will not deny me, that as there are many who take up their religion upon wrong grounds, to the endangering of their ſouls; ſo there are many that abandon themſelves to the heat of their luſts, to the endangering of their ſouls. 2. I will ſuppoſe, that as force applied your way is apt to make the inconſiderate conſider, ſo force applied another way is apt to make the laſcivious chaſte. The argument then, in your form, will ſtand thus; " Who can deny but that force, indirectly and " at a diſtance, may, by caſtration, do ſome ſervice to- " wards bringing men to embrace that chaſtity, which " otherwiſe they would never acquit themſelves with." Thus, you ſee, " caſtration may, indirectly and at a " diſtance, be ſerviceable towards the ſalvation of men's " ſouls." But will you ſay, from ſuch an uſefulneſs as this, becauſe it may, indirectly and at a diſtance, conduce to the ſaving of any of his ſubjects ſouls, that therefore the magiſtrate has a right to do it, and may by force make his ſubjects eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven? It is not for the magiſtrate, or any-body elſe, upon an imagination of its uſefulneſs, to make uſe of any other means for the ſalvation of men's ſouls, than what the author and finiſher of our faith hath directed. You may be miſtaken in what you think uſeful. Dives thought, and ſo perhaps ſhould you and I too, if not better informed by the ſcriptures, that it would be uſeful to rouze and awaken men if one ſhould come to them from the dead. But he was miſtaken. And we are told, that if men will not hearken to Moſes and the prophets, the means appointed; neither will the ſtrangeneſs nor terrour of one coming from the dead, perſuade them. If what we are apt to think uſeful were thence to be concluded ſo, we ſhould, I fear, be obliged to believe the miracles pretended to by the church of Rome.

For miracles, we know, were once useful for the promoting true religion, and the salvation of souls; which is more than you say for your political punishments: but yet we must conclude that God thinks them not useful now; unless we will say, that which without impiety cannot be said, that the wise and benign dispoſer and governor of all things does not now use all useful means for promoting his own honour in the world, and the good of souls. I think this consequence will hold, as well as what you draw in near the same words.

Let us not therefore be more wise than our Maker, in that stupendous and supernatural work of our salvation. The scripture, that reveals it to us, contains all that we can know, or do, in order to it: and where that is silent, it is in us presumption to direct. When you can show any commission in scripture, for the use of force to compel men to hear, any more than to embrace, the doctrine of others that differ from them, we shall have reason to submit to it, and the magistrate have some ground to set up this new way of persecution. But till then, it will be fit for us to obey that precept of the gospel, which bids us "take heed what we hear," Mark iv. 24. So that hearing is not always so useful as you suppose. If it had, we should never have had so direct a caution against it. It is not any imaginary usefulness, you can suppose, which can make that a punishable crime, which the magistrate was never authorized to meddle with. "Go and teach all nations," was a commission of our Saviour's: but there was not added to it, punish those that will not hear and consider what you say. No, but "if they will not receive "you, shake off the dust of your feet;" leave them, and apply yourselves to some others. And St. Paul knew no other means to make men hear, but the preaching of the gospel; as will appear to any one who will read Romans x. 14, &c. "Faith cometh by hearing, "and hearing by the word of God."

You go on, and in favour of your beloved force you tell us that it is not only useful but needful. And here, after having at large, in the four following pages, set out the negligence or aversion, or other hinderances

that

that keep men from examining, with that application and freedom of judgment they ſhould, the grounds upon which they take up and perſiſt in their religion; you come to conclude force neceſſary. Your words are: "If men are generally averſe to a due conſideration of "things, where they are moſt concerned to uſe it; if "they uſually take up their religion without examining "it as they ought, and then grow ſo opinionative and "ſo ſtiff in their prejudice, that neither the gentleſt "admonitions, nor the moſt earneſt intreaties, ſhall "ever prevail with them afterwards to do it; what "means is there left, beſides the grace of God, to re-"duce thoſe of them that are gone into a wrong way, "but to lay thorns and briars in it? That ſince they "are deaf to all perſuaſions, the uneaſineſs they meet "with may at leaſt put them to a ſtand, and incline "them to lend an ear to thoſe who tell them they have "miſtaken their way, and offer to ſhow them the right." What means is there left, ſay you, but force? What to do? "To reduce men, who are out of it, into the right "way." So you tell us here. And to that, I ſay, there is other means beſides force; that which was appointed and made uſe of from the beginning, the preaching of the goſpel.

"But, ſay you, to make them hear, to make them "conſider, to make them examine, there is no other "means but puniſhment; and therefore it is neceſ-"ſary."

I anſwer, 1. What if God, for reaſons beſt known to himſelf, would not have men compelled to hear; but thought the good tidings of ſalvation, and the propoſals of life and death, means and inducements enough to make them hear, and conſider, now as well as heretofore? Then your means, your puniſhments, are not neceſſary. What if God would have men left to their freedom in this point, if they will hear, or if they will forbear, will you conſtrain them? Thus we are ſure he did with his own people: and this when they were in captivity, Ezek. xi. 5, 7. And it is very like were ill-treated for being of a different religion from the national, and ſo were puniſhed as diſſenters. Yet then God

expected not that those punishments should force them to hearken more than at other times: as appears by Ezek. iii. 11. And this also is the method of the gospel. "We are ambassadors for Christ; as if God did "beseech you in Christ's stead," says St. Paul, 2 Cor. v. 20. If God thought it necessary to have men punished to make them give ear, he could have called magistrates to be spreaders and ministers of the gospel, as well as poor fishermen, or Paul a persecutor; who yet wanted not power to punish where punishment was necessary, as is evident in Ananias and Sapphira, and the incestuous Corinthian.

2. What if God, foreseeing this force would be in the hands of men as passionate, humoursome, as liable to prejudice and errour as the rest of their brethren, did not think it a proper means to bring men into the right way?

3. What if there be other means? Then your's ceases to be necessary, upon the account that there is no means left. For you yourself allow, "That the grace of God "is another means." And I suppose you will not deny it to be both a proper and sufficient means; and, which is more, the only means; such means as can work by itself, and without which all the force in the world can do nothing. God alone can open the ear that it may hear, and open the heart that it may understand: and this he does in his own good time, and to whom he is graciously pleased; but not according to the will and fancy of man, when he thinks fit, by punishments, to compel his brethren. If God has pronounced against any person or people, what he did against the jews, (Isa. vi. 10.) "Make the heart of this people fat, and "make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they "see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and un- "derstand with their heart, and convert, and be heal- "ed;" will all the force you can use be a means to make them hear and understand, and be converted?

But, sir, to return to your argument; you see "no "other means left (taking the world as we now find it) "to make men thoroughly and impartially examine a "religion, which they embraced upon such induce- "ments

" ments as ought to have no ſway at all in the matter, " and with little or no examination of the proper " grounds of it.' And thence you conclude the uſe of force, by the magiſtrates upon diſſenters, neceſſary. And, I ſay, I ſee no other means left (taking the world as we now find it, wherein the magiſtrates never lay penalties, for matters of religion, upon thoſe of their own church, nor is it to be expected they ever ſhould;) " to make men" of the national church, any where, " thoroughly and impartially examine a religion, which " they embraced upon ſuch inducements, as ought to " have no ſway at all in the matter, and therefore with " little or no examination of the proper grounds of it." And therefore I conclude the uſe of force by diſſenters upon conformiſts neceſſary. I appeal to the world, whether this be not as juſt and natural a concluſion as yours. Though, if you will have my opinion, I think the more genuine conſequence is, that force, to make men examine matters of religion, is not neceſſary at all. But you may take which of theſe conſequences you pleaſe. Both of them, I am ſure, you cannot avoid. It is not for you and me, out of an imagination that they may be uſeful, or are neceſſary, to preſcribe means in the great and myſterious work of ſalvation, other than what God himſelf has directed. God has appointed force as uſeful or neceſſary, and therefore it is to be uſed; is a way of arguing, becoming the ignorance and humility of poor creatures. But I think force uſeful or neceſſary, and therefore it is to be uſed; has, methinks, a little too much preſumption in it. You aſk, " What " means elſe is there left?" None, ſay I, to be uſed by man, but what God himſelf has directed in the ſcriptures, wherein are contained all the means and methods of ſalvation. " Faith is the gift of God." And we are not to uſe any other means to procure this gift to any one, but what God himſelf has preſcribed. If he has there appointed that any ſhould be forced " to hear " thoſe who tell them they have miſtaken their way, " and offer to ſhow them the right;" and that they ſhould be puniſhed by the magiſtrate if they did not; it will be paſt doubt, it is to be made uſe of. But till

that can be done, it will be in vain to say what other means is there left. If all the means God has appointed, to make men hear and consider, be "exhortation in season and out of season," &c. together with prayer for them, and the example of meekness and a good life; this is all ought to be done, "Whether they "will hear, or whether they will forbear."

By these means the gospel at first made itself to be heard through a great part of the world; and in a crooked and perverse generation, led away by lusts, humours, and prejudice, as well as this you complain of, prevailed with men to hear and embrace the truth, and take care of their own souls; without the assistance of any such force of the magistrate, which you now think needful. But whatever neglect or aversion there is in some men, impartially and thoroughly to be instructed; there will upon a due examination, I fear, be found no less a neglect and aversion in others, impartially and thoroughly to instruct them. It is not the talking even general truths in plain and clear language; much less a man's own fancies in scholastic or uncommon ways of speaking, an hour or two, once a week in public; that is enough to instruct even willing hearers in the way of salvation, and the grounds of their religion. They are not politic discourses which are the means of right information in the foundations of religion. For with such, sometimes venting antimonarchical principles, sometimes again preaching up nothing but absolute monarchy and passive obedience, as the one or other have been in vogue, and the way to preferment; have our churches rung in their turns, so loudly, that reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince men of the truth in the controverted points of religion, and to direct them in the right way to salvation, were scarce any where to be heard. But how many, do you think, by friendly and christian debates with them at their houses, and by the gentle methods of the gospel made use of in private conversation, might have been brought into the church; who, by railing from the pulpit, ill and unfriendly treatment out of it, and other neglects and miscarriages of those who claimed to be their teachers, have

have been driven from hearing them? Paint the defects and miscarriages frequent on this side, as well as you have done those on the other, and then do you, with all the world, consider whether those whom you so handsomely declaim against, for being misled by "education, passion, humour, prejudice, obstinacy," &c. do deserve all the punishment. Perhaps it will be answered: if there be so much toil in it, that particular persons must be applied to, who then will be a minister? And what if a layman should reply: if there be so much toil in it, that doubts must be cleared, prejudices removed, foundations examined, &c. who then will be a protestant? the excuse will be as good hereafter for the one as for the other.

This new method of yours, which you say "no-body "can deny but that indirectly, and at a distance, it does "some service towards bringing men to embrace the "truth:" was never yet thought on by the most refined persecutors. Though indeed it is not altogether unlike the plea made use of to excuse the late barbarous usage of the protestants in France, designed to extirpate the reformed religion there; from being a persecution for religion. The French king requires all his subjects to come to mass: those who do not, are punished with a witness. For what? Not for their religion, say the pleaders for that discipline, but for disobeying the king's laws. So by your rule, the dissenters, for thither you would, and thither you must come, if you mean any thing, must be punished. For what? Not for their religion, say you; not for "following the light of their "own reason; not for obeying the dictates of their own "consciences." That you think not fit. For what then are they to be punished? "To make them, say "you, examine the religion they have embraced, and "the religion they have rejected." So that they are punished, not for having offended against a law: for there is no law of the land that requires them to examine. And which now is the fairer plea, pray judge. You ought, indeed, to have the credit of this new invention. All other law-makers have constantly taken this method, that where any thing was to be amended,

the fault was firſt declared, and then penalties denounced againſt all thoſe, who, after a time ſet, ſhould be found guilty of it. This the common ſenſe of mankind, and the very reaſon of laws, which are intended not for puniſhment, but correction, has made ſo plain, that the ſubtileſt and moſt refined law-makers have not got out of this courſe; nor have the moſt ignorant and barbarous nations miſſed it. But you have outdone Solon and Lycurgus, Moſes and our Saviour, and are reſolved to be a law-maker of a way by yourſelf. It is an old and obſolete way, and will not ſerve your turn, to begin with warnings and threats of penalties to be inflicted on thoſe who do not reform, but continue to do that which you think they fail in. To allow of impunity to the innocent, or the opportunity of amendment to thoſe who would avoid the penalties, are formalities not worth your notice. You are for a ſhorter and ſurer way. Take a whole tribe, and puniſh them at all adventures; whether guilty or no of the miſcarriage which you would have amended; or without ſo much as telling them what it is you would have them do, but leaving them to find it out if they can. All theſe abſurdities are contained in your way of proceeding; and are impoſſible to be avoided by any one who will puniſh diſſenters, and only diſſenters, to make them "conſider and weigh the "grounds of their religion, and impartially examine "whether it be true or no; and upon what grounds they "took it up, that ſo they may find and embrace the "truth that muſt ſave them." But that this new ſort of diſcipline may have all fair play, let us inquire firſt, who it is you would have be puniſhed. In the place above-cited, they are "thoſe who are got into a wrong "way, and are deaf to all perſuaſions." If theſe are the men to be puniſhed, let a law be made againſt them: you have my conſent; and that is the proper courſe to have offenders puniſhed. For you do not, I hope, intend to puniſh any fault by a law, which you do not name in the law; nor make a law againſt any fault you would not have puniſhed. And now, if you are ſincere, and in earneſt, and are, as a fair man ſhould be, for what your words plainly ſignify, and nothing elſe; what

what will ſuch a law ſerve for? Men in the wrong way are to be puniſhed: but who are in the wrong way is the queſtion. You have no more reaſon to determine it againſt one, who differs from you; than he has to conclude againſt you, who differ from him. No, not though you have the magiſtrate and the national church on your ſide. For, if to differ from them be to be in the wrong way, you, who are in the right way in England, will be in the wrong way in France. Every one here muſt be judge for himſelf: and your law will reach no-body, till you have convinced him he is in the wrong way. And then there will be no need of puniſhment to make him conſider; unleſs you will affirm again, what you have denied, and have men puniſhed for embracing the religion they believe to be true, when it differs from yours or the public.

Beſides being in the wrong way, thoſe whom you would have puniſhed muſt be ſuch as are deaf to all perſuaſions. But any ſuch, I ſuppoſe, you will hardly find, who hearken to no-body, not to thoſe of their own way. If you mean by deaf to all perſuaſions, all perſuaſions of a contrary party, or of a different church; ſuch, I ſuppoſe, you may abundantly find in your own church, as well as elſewhere; and I preſume to them you are ſo charitable, that you would not have them puniſhed for not lending an ear to ſeducers. For conſtancy in the truth, and perſeverance in the faith, is, I hope, rather to be encouraged, than by any penalties checked in the orthodox. And your church, doubtleſs, as well as all others, is orthodox to itſelf in all its tenets. If you mean by all perſuaſion, all your perſuaſion, or all perſuaſion of thoſe of your communion; you do but beg the queſtion, and ſuppoſe you have a right to puniſh thoſe who differ from, and will not comply with you.

Your next words are, "When men fly from the means "of a right information, and will not ſo much as con- "ſider how reaſonable it is thoroughly and impartially "to examine a religion, which they embraced upon "ſuch inducements as ought to have no ſway at all in "the matter; and therefore with little or no examina-

"tion

" tion of the proper grounds of it; what human me-
" thod can be uſed, to bring them to act like men, in
" an affair of ſuch conſequence, and to make a wiſer
" and more rational choice, but that of laying ſuch pe-
" nalties upon them, as may balance the weight of
" thoſe prejudices which inclined them to prefer a falſe
" way before the true; and recover them to ſo much ſo-
" briety and reflection, as ſeriouſly to put the queſtion
" to themſelves, whether it be really worth the while
" to undergo ſuch inconveniencies, for adhering to a
" religion, which, for any thing they know, may be
" falſe, or for rejecting another (if that be the caſe)
" which for any thing they know may be true, till they
" have brought it to the bar of reaſon, and given it a
" fair trial there?" Here you again bring in ſuch as prefer a falſe way before a true: to which having anſwered already, I ſhall here ſay no more, but that, ſince our church will not allow thoſe to be in a falſe way who are out of the church of Rome, becauſe the church of Rome, which pretends infallibility, declares her's to be the only true way; certainly no one of our church, nor any other, which claims not infallibility, can require any one to take the teſtimony of any church, as a ſufficient proof of the truth of her own doctrine. So that true and falſe, as it commonly happens, when we ſuppoſe them for ourſelves, or our party, in effect, ſignify juſt nothing, or nothing to the purpoſe; unleſs we can think that true or falſe in England, which will not be ſo at Rome, or Geneva: and vice verſâ. As for the reſt of the deſcription of thoſe on whom you are here laying penalties; I beſeech you conſider whether it will not belong to any of your church, let it be what it will. Conſider, I ſay, if there be none in your church " who
" have embraced her religion, upon ſuch inducements
" as ought to have no ſway at all in the matter, and
" therefore with little or no examination of the proper
" grounds of it; who have not been inclined by preju-
" dices; who do not adhere to a religion, which for any
" thing they know may be falſe, and who have rejected
" another which for any thing they know may be true."
If you have any ſuch in your communion, and it will be

an

an admirable, though I fear but a little, flock that has none ſuch in it; conſider well what you have done. You have prepared rods for them, for which I imagine they will con you no thanks. For to make any tolerable ſenſe of what you here propoſe, it muſt be underſtood that you would have men of all religions puniſhed, to make them conſider "whether it be really worth the while "to undergo ſuch inconveniencies for adhering to a re-"ligion which for any thing they know may be falſe." If you hope to avoid that, by what you have ſaid of true and falſe; and pretend that the ſuppoſed preference of the true way in your church ought to preſerve its members from your puniſhment; you manifeſtly trifle. For every church's teſtimony, that it has choſen the true way, muſt be taken for itſelf; and then none will be liable; and your new invention of puniſhment is come to nothing: or elſe the differing churches teſtimonies muſt be taken one for another; and then they will be all out of the true way, and your church need penalties as well as the reſt. So that, upon your principles, they muſt all or none be puniſhed. Chooſe which you pleaſe: one of them, I think, you cannot eſcape.

What you ſay in the next words: "Where inſtruc-"tion is ſtifly refuſed, and all admonitions and perſua-"ſions prove vain and ineffectual;" differs nothing, but in the way of expreſſing, from deaf to all perſuaſions: and ſo that is anſwered already.

In another place, you give us another deſcription of thoſe you think ought to be puniſhed, in theſe words: "Thoſe who refuſe to embrace the doctrine, and ſub-"mit to the ſpiritual government of the proper mini-"ſters of religion, who by ſpecial deſignation are ap-"pointed to exhort, admoniſh, reprove," &c. Here then, thoſe to be puniſhed, "are ſuch who refuſe to "embrace the doctrine, and ſubmit to the government "of the proper miniſters of religion." Whereby we are as much ſtill at uncertainty, as we were before, who thoſe are, who by your ſcheme and laws ſuitable to it are to be puniſhed. Since every church has, as it thinks, its proper miniſters of religion. And if you mean thoſe that refuſe to embrace the doctrine, and ſubmit to the

govern-

government of the ministers of another church; then all men will be guilty, and must be punished; even those of your church, as well as others. If you mean those who refuse, &c. the ministers of their own church; very few will incur your penalties. But if, by these proper ministers of religion, the ministers of some particular church are intended, why do you not name it? Why are you so reserved, in a matter wherein, if you speak not out, all the rest that you say will be to no purpose? Are men to be punished for refusing to embrace the doctrine, and submit to the government, of the proper ministers of the church of Geneva? For this time, since you have declared nothing to the contrary, let me suppose you of that church: and then, I am sure, that is it that you would name. For of whatever church you are, if you think the ministers of any one church ought to be hearkened to, and obeyed, it must be those of your own. There are persons to be punished, you say. This you contend for, all through your book; and lay so much stress on it, that you make the preservation and propagation of religion, and the salvation of souls, to depend on it; and yet you describe them by so general and equivocal marks; that, unless it be upon suppositions which no-body will grant you, I dare say, neither you, nor any body else, will be able to find one guilty. Pray find me, if you can, a man whom you can judicially prove, (for he that is to be punished by law must be fairly tried) is in a wrong way, in respect of his faith; I mean, "who is deaf to all persuasions, who flies from all means of a right information, who refuses to embrace the doctrine, and submit to the government of the spiritual pastors." And when you have done that, I think, I may allow you what power you please to punish him, without any prejudice to the toleration the author of the letter proposes.

But why, I pray, all this boggling, all this loose talking, as if you knew not what you meant, or durst not speak it out? Would you be for punishing some body, you know not whom? I do not think so ill of you. Let me then speak out for you. The evidence of the argument

ment has convinced you that men ought not to be perſecuted for their religion; that the ſeverities in uſe amongſt chriſtians cannot be defended; that the magiſtrate has not authority to compel any one to his religion. This you are forced to yield. But you would fain retain ſome power in the magiſtrate's hands to puniſh diſſenters, upon a new pretence; viz. not for having embraced the doctrine and worſhip they believe to be true and right, but for not having well conſidered their own and the magiſtrate's religion. To ſhow you that I do not ſpeak wholly without-book; give me leave to mind you of one paſſage of yours. The words are, "Penalties to put them upon a ſerious and impartial "examination of the controverſy between the magiſ-"trates and them." Though theſe words be not intended to tell us who you would have puniſhed, yet it may be plainly inferred from them. And they more clearly point out whom you aim at, than all the foregoing places, where you ſeem to (and ſhould) deſcribe them. For they are ſuch as between whom and the magiſtrate there is a controverſy: that is, in ſhort, who differ from the magiſtrate in religion. And now indeed you have given us a note by which theſe you would have puniſhed may be made known. We have, with much ado, found out at laſt whom it is we may preſume you would have puniſhed. Which in other caſes is uſually not very difficult: becauſe there the faults to be mended eaſily deſign the perſons to be corrected. But yours is a new method, and unlike all that ever went before it.

In the next place; let us ſee for what you would have them puniſhed. You tell us, and it will eaſily be granted you, that not to examine and weigh impartially, and without prejudice or paſſion, all which, for ſhortneſs-ſake, we will expreſs by this one word conſider, the religion one embraces or refuſes, is a fault very common, and very prejudicial to true religion, and the ſalvation of men's ſouls. But penalties and puniſhments are very neceſſary, ſay you, to remedy this evil.

Let us ſee now how you apply this remedy. Therefore, ſay you, let all diſſenters be puniſhed. Why? Have no diſſenters conſidered of religion? Or have all conformiſts

conformiſts conſidered? That you yourſelf will not ſay. Your project therefore is juſt as reaſonable, as if a lethargy growing epidemical in England, you ſhould propoſe to have a law made to bliſter and ſcarify and ſhave the heads of all who wear gowns: though it be certain that neither all who wear gowns are lethargic, nor all who are lethargic, wear gowns:

——— Dii te Damaſippe deaeque
Verum ob conſilium donent tonſore.

For there could not be certainly a more learned advice, than that one man ſhould be pulled by the ears, becauſe another is aſleep. This, when you have conſidered of it again, for I find, according to your principle, all men have now and then need to be jogged, you will, I gueſs, be convinced is not like a fair phyſician, to apply a remedy to a diſeaſe; but, like an enraged enemy, to vent one's ſpleen upon a party. Common ſenſe, as well as common juſtice, requires, that the remedies of laws and penalties ſhould be directed againſt the evil that is to be removed, wherever it be found. And if the puniſhment you think ſo neceſſary be, as you pretend, to cure the miſchief you complain of, you muſt let it purſue and fall on the guilty, and thoſe only, in what company ſoever they are; and not, as you here propoſe, and is the higheſt injuſtice, puniſh the innocent conſidering diſſenter with the guilty; and, on the other ſide, let the inconſiderate guilty conformiſt eſcape with the innocent. For one may rationally preſume that the national church has ſome, nay more in proportion, of thoſe who little conſider or concern themſelves about religion, than any congregation of diſſenters. For conſcience, or the care of their ſouls, being once laid aſide; intereſt of courſe leads men into that ſociety, where the protection and countenance of the government, and hopes of preferment, bid faireſt to their remaining deſires. So that if careleſs, negligent, inconſiderate men in matters of religion, who without being forced would not conſider, are to be rouzed into a care of their ſouls, and a ſearch after truth, by puniſhments; the national religion, in all countries, will certainly

certainly have a right to the greateſt ſhare of thoſe puniſhments; at leaſt, not to be wholly exempt from them.

This is that which the author of the letter, as I remember, complains of; and that juſtly, viz. "That "the pretended care of men's ſouls always expreſſes "itſelf, in thoſe who would have force any way made "uſe of to that end, in very unequal methods; ſome "perſons being to be treated with ſeverity, whilſt "others guilty of the ſame faults, are not to be ſo much "as touched." Though you are got pretty well out of the deep mud, and renounce puniſhments directly for religion; yet you ſtick ſtill in this part of the mire; whilſt you would have diſſenters puniſhed to make them conſider, but would not have any thing done to conformiſts, though ever ſo negligent in this point of conſidering. The author's letter pleaſed me, becauſe it is equal to all mankind, is direct, and will, I think, hold every-where; which I take to be a good mark of truth. For I ſhall always ſuſpect that neither to comport with the truth of religion, or the deſign of the goſpel, which is ſuited to only ſome one country, or party. What is true and good in England, will be true and good at Rome too, in China, or Geneva. But whether your great and only method for the propagating of truth, by bringing the inconſiderate by puniſhments to conſider, would, according to your way of applying your puniſhments only to diſſenters from the national religion, be of uſe in thoſe countries, or any where but where you ſuppoſe the magiſtrate to be in the right, judge you. Pray, ſir, conſider a little, whether prejudice has not ſome ſhare in your way of arguing. For this is your poſition: "Men are generally negligent in examining "the grounds of their religion." This I grant. But could there be a more wild and incoherent conſequence drawn from it, than this: "therefore diſſenters muſt "be puniſhed?"

But that being laid aſide, let us now ſee to what end they muſt be puniſhed. Sometimes it is, "To bring "them to conſider thoſe reaſons and arguments which "are proper and ſufficient to convince them." Of

what?

what? That it is not eaſy to ſet Grantham ſteeple upon Paul's church? Whatever it be you would have them convinced of, you are not willing to tell us. And ſo it may be any thing. Sometimes it is, "To incline them "to lend an ear to thoſe who tell them they have miſ- "taken their way, and offer to ſhow them the right." Which is, to lend an ear to all who differ from them in religion; as well crafty ſeducers, as others. Whether this be for the procuring the ſalvation of their ſouls, the end for which you ſay this force is to be uſed, judge you. But this I am ſure; whoever will lend an ear to all who will tell them they are out of the way, will not have much time for any other buſineſs.

Sometimes it is, "To recover men to ſo much ſo- "briety and reflection, as ſeriouſly to put the queſtion to "themſelves, whether it be really worth their while to "undergo ſuch inconveniencies, for adhering to a re- "ligion which, for any thing they know, may be falſe; "or for rejecting another (if that be the caſe) which, "for aught they know, may be true, till they have "brought it to the bar of reaſon, and given it a fair "trial there." Which, in ſhort, amounts to thus much, viz. "to make them examine whether their religion be "true, and ſo worth the holding, under thoſe penalties "that are annexed to it." Diſſenters are indebted to you for your great care of their ſouls. But what, I beſeech you, ſhall become of thoſe of the national church, every-where, which make far the greater part of mankind, who have no ſuch puniſhments to make them conſider; who have not this only remedy provided for them, but are left in that deplorable condition you mention, "of being ſuffered quietly, and without mo- "leſtation, to take no care at all of their ſouls, or in "doing of it to follow their own prejudices, humours, "or ſome crafty ſeducers?" Need not thoſe of the national church, as well as others, "bring their religion "to the bar of reaſon, and give it a fair trial there?" And if they need to do ſo, as they muſt, if all national religions cannot be ſuppoſed true; they will always need that which, you ſay, is the only means to make them do ſo. So that if you are ſure, as you tell us,

that

that there is need of your method; I am ſure there is as much need of it in national churches, as any other. And ſo, for aught I can ſee, you muſt either puniſh them, or let others alone; unleſs you think it reaſonable that the far greater part of mankind ſhould conſtantly be without that ſovereign and only remedy, which they ſtand in need of equally with other people.

Sometimes the end for which men muſt be puniſhed is, "to diſpoſe them to ſubmit to inſtruction, and to "give a fair hearing to the reaſons offered for the en- "lightening their minds, and diſcovering the truth to "them." If their own words may be taken for it, there are as few diſſenters as conformiſts, in any country, who will not profeſs they have done, and do this. And if their own words may not be taken; who, I pray, muſt be judge? You and your magiſtrates? If ſo, then it is plain you puniſh them not to diſpoſe them to ſubmit to inſtruction, but to your inſtruction; not to diſpoſe them to give a fair hearing to reaſons offered for the enlightening their minds, but to give an obedient hearing to your reaſons. If you mean this; it had been fairer and ſhorter to have ſpoken out plainly, than thus in fair words, of indefinite ſignification, to ſay that which amounts to nothing. For what ſenſe is it, to puniſh a man "to diſpoſe him to ſubmit to inſtruction, "and give a fair hearing to reaſons offered for enlight- "ning his mind, and diſcovering truth to him," who goes two or three times a week ſeveral miles on purpoſe to do it, and that with the hazard of his liberty or purſe? Unleſs you mean your inſtructions, your reaſons, your truth: which brings us but back to what you have diſclaimed, plain perſecution for differing in religion.

Sometimes this is to be done, "to prevail with men "to weigh matters of religion carefully, and impartially." Diſcountenance and puniſhment put into one ſcale, with impunity and hopes of preferment put into the other, is as ſure a way to make a man weigh impartially, as it would be for a prince to bribe and threaten a judge to make him judge uprightly.

Sometimes it is, " To make men bethink themſelves, " and put it out of the power of any fooliſh humour, " or unreaſonable prejudice, to alienate them from truth " and their own happineſs." Add but this, to put it out of the power of any humour or prejudice of their own, or other men's; and I grant the end is good, if you can find the means to procure it. But why it ſhould not be put out of the power of other men's humour or prejudice, as well as their own, wants, and will always want, a reaſon to prove. Would it not, I beſeech you, to an indifferent bye-ſtander, appear humour or prejudice, or ſomething as bad; to ſee men, who profeſs a religion revealed from heaven, and which they own contains all in it neceſſary to ſalvation, exclude men from their communion, and perſecute them with the penalties of the civil law, for not joining in the uſe of ceremonies which are no-where to be found in that revealed religion? Would it not appear humour or prejudice, or ſome ſuch thing, to a ſober impartial heathen; to ſee chriſtians exclude and perſecute one of the ſame faith, for things which they themſelves confeſs to be indifferent, and not worth the contending for? " Prejudice, humour, paſſion, luſts, impreſſions of edu- " cation, reverence and admiration of perſons, worldly " reſpects, love of their own choice, and the like," to which you juſtly impute many men's taking up, and perſiſting in their religion, are indeed good words; and ſo, on the other ſide, are theſe following; " truth the " right way, enlightening reaſon, ſound judgment;" but they ſignify nothing at all to your purpoſe, till you can evidently and unqueſtionably ſhow the world that the latter, viz. " truth and the right way," &c. are always, and in all countries, to be found only in the national church; and the former, viz. " paſſion and prejudice," &c. only amongſt the diſſenters. But to go on:

Sometimes it is, " to bring men to take ſuch care as " they ought of their ſalvation." What care is ſuch as men ought to take, whilſt they are out of your church, will be hard for you to tell me. But you endeavour to explain yourſelf, in the following words: " that they

may

" may not blindly leave it to the choice neither of any " other perſon, nor yet of their own luſts and paſſions, " to preſcribe to them what faith or what worſhip they " ſhall embrace." You do well to make uſe of puniſhment to ſhut paſſion out of the choice: becauſe you know fear of ſuffering is no paſſion. But let that paſs. You would have men puniſhed, " to bring them to take " ſuch care of their ſalvation, that they may not blindly " leave it to the choice of any other perſon to preſcribe " to them." Are you ſincere? Are you in earneſt? Tell me then truly: did the magiſtrate or national church, any where, or yours in particular, ever puniſh any man, to bring him to have this care, which, you ſay, he ought to take of his ſalvation? Did you ever puniſh any man, that he might not blindly leave it to the choice of his pariſh-prieſt, or biſhop, or the convocation, what faith or worſhip he ſhould embrace? It will be ſuſpected care of a party, or any thing elſe rather than care of the ſalvation of men's ſouls; if, having found out ſo uſeful, ſo neceſſary a remedy, the only method there is room left for, you will apply it but partially, and make trial of it only on thoſe whom you have truly leaſt kindneſs for. This will, unavoidably, give one reaſon to imagine, you do not think ſo well of your remedy as you pretend, who are ſo ſparing of it to your friends; but are very free of it to ſtrangers, who in other things are uſed very much like enemies.—But your remedy is like the helleboraſter, that grew in the woman's garden for the cure of worms in her neighbour's children: for truly it wrought too roughly, to give it to any of her own. Methinks your charity, in your preſent perſecution, is much what as prudent, as juſtifiable, as that good woman's. I hope I have done you no injury, that I here ſuppoſe you of the church of England. If I have, I beg your pardon.—It is no offence of malice, I aſſure you: for I ſuppoſe no worſe of you, than I confeſs of myſelf.

Sometimes this puniſhment that you contend for, is " to bring men to act according to reaſon and ſound " judgment."

" Tertius è cœlo cecidit Cato,"

This is reformation indeed. If you can help us to it, you will deſerve ſtatues to be erected to you, as to the reſtorer of decayed religion. But if all men have not reaſon and ſound judgment, will puniſhment put it into them? Beſides, concerning this matter, mankind is ſo divided, that he acts according to reaſon and ſound judgment at Augſburg, who would be judged to do the quite contrary at Edinburgh. Will puniſhment make men know what is reaſon and ſound judgment? If it will not, it is impoſſible it ſhould make them act according to it. Reaſon and ſound judgment are the elixir itſelf, the univerſal remedy; and you may as reaſonably puniſh men to bring them to have the philoſopher's ſtone, as to bring them to act according to reaſon and ſound judgment.

Sometimes it is, "To put men upon a ſerious and "impartial examination of the controverſy between the "magiſtrate and them, which is the way for them to "come to the knowledge of the truth." But what if the truth be on neither ſide, as I am apt to imagine you will think it is not, where neither the magiſtrate nor the diſſenter is either of them of your church; how will the "examining the controverſy between the ma-"giſtrate and him be the way to come to the know-"ledge of the truth?" Suppoſe the controverſy between a lutheran and a papiſt; or, if you pleaſe, between a preſbyterian magiſtrate and a quaker ſubject.—Will the examining the controverſy between the magiſtrate and the diſſenting ſubject, in this caſe, bring him to the knowledge of the truth? If you ſay yes, then you grant one of theſe to have the truth on his ſide; for the examining the controverſy between a preſbyterian and a quaker, leaves the controverſy either of them has with the church of England, or any other church, untouched. And ſo one, at leaſt, of thoſe being already come to the knowledge of the truth, ought not to be put under your diſcipline of puniſhment, which is only to bring him to the truth. If you ſay no, and that the examining the controverſy between the magiſtrate and the diſſenter, in this caſe, will not bring him

to

to the knowledge of the truth; you confeſs your rule to be falſe, and your method to no purpoſe.

To conclude, your ſyſtem is, in ſhort, this: You would have all men, laying aſide prejudice, humour, paſſion, &c. examine the grounds of their religion, and ſearch for the truth. This, I confeſs, is heartily to be wiſhed. The means that you propoſe to make men do this, is that diſſenters ſhould be puniſhed to make them do ſo. It is as if you had ſaid, Men generally are guilty of a fault; therefore let one ſect, who have the ill luck to be of an opinion different from the magiſtrate, be puniſhed. This at firſt ſight ſhocks any who has the leaſt ſpark of ſenſe, reaſon, or juſtice. But having ſpoken of this already, and concluding that upon ſecond thoughts you yourſelf will be aſhamed of it, let us conſider it put ſo as to be conſiſtent with common ſenſe, and with all the advantage it can bear; and then let us ſee what you can make of it: "Men are negligent in examining the religions they "embrace, refuſe, or perſiſt in; therefore it is fit they "ſhould be puniſhed to make them do it." This is a conſequence, indeed, which may, without defiance to common ſenſe, be drawn from it. This is the uſe, the only uſe, which you think puniſhment can indirectly, and at a diſtance, have, in matters of religion. You would have men by puniſhments driven to examine. What? Religion. To what end? To bring them to the knowledge of the truth. But I anſwer,

1. Every one has not the ability to do this.

2. Every one has not the opportunity to do it.

Would you have every poor proteſtant, for example, in the Palatinate, examine thoroughly whether the pope be infallible, or head of the church; whether there be a purgatory; whether ſaints are to be prayed to, or the dead prayed for; whether the ſcripture be the only rule of faith; whether there be no ſalvation out of the church; and whether there be no church without biſhops; and an hundred other queſtions in controverſy between the papiſts and thoſe proteſtants; and when he had maſtered theſe, go on to fortify himſelf againſt the

opinions and objections of other churches he differs from? This, which is no small task, must be done, before a man can have brought his religion to the bar of reason, and give it a fair trial there. And if you will punish men till this be done, the countryman must leave off plowing and sowing, and betake himself to the study of Greek and Latin; and the artisan must sell his tools, to buy fathers and schoolmen, and leave his family to starve. If something less than this will satisfy you, pray tell me what is enough. Have they considered and examined enough, if they are satisfied themselves where the truth lies? If this be the limits of their examination, you will find few to punish; unless you will punish them to make them do what they have done already: for, however he came by his religion, there is scarce any one to be found who does not own himself satisfied that he is in the right. Or else, must they be punished to make them consider and examine till they embrace that which you choose for truth? If this be so, what do you but in effect choose for them, when yet you would have men punished, "to bring them to such a "care of their souls, that no other person might choose "for them?" If it be truth in general, you would have them by punishments driven to seek; that is to offer matter of dispute, and not a rule of discipline; for to punish any one to make him seek till he find truth, without a judge of truth, is to punish for you know not what; and is all one as if you should whip a scholar to make him find out the square root of a number you do not know. I wonder not therefore that you could not resolve with yourself what degree of severity you would have used, nor how long continued; when you dare not speak out directly whom you would have punished, and are far from being clear to what end they should be under penalties.

Consonant to this uncertainty, of whom, or what to be punished, you tell us, "that there is no question of "the success of this method. Force will certainly do, "if duly proportioned to the design of it."

What, I pray, is the design of it? I challenge you, or any man living, out of what you have said in your book,

book, to tell me directly what it is. In all other punishments that ever I heard of yet, till now that you have taught the world a new method, the design of them has been to cure the crime they are denounced against, and so I think it ought to be here. What I beseech you is the crime here? Dissenting? That you say not any where, is a fault. Besides you tell us, "that the "magistrate hath not authority to compel any one to "his religion:" and that you do "not require that "men should have no rule but the religion of the coun-"try." And the power you ascribe to the magistrate is given him to bring men, "not to his own, but to the "true religion." If dissenting be not the fault, is it that a man does not examine his own religion, and the grounds of it? Is that the crime your punishments are designed to cure? Neither that dare you say; lest you displease more than you satisfy with your new discipline. And then again, as I said before, you must tell us how far you would have them examine, before you punish them for not doing it. And I imagine, if that were all we required of you, it would be long enough before you would trouble us with a law, that should prescribe to every one how far he was to examine matters of religion; wherein if he failed and came short, he was to be punished; if he performed, and went in his examination to the bounds set by the law, he was acquitted and free. Sir, when you consider it again, you will perhaps think this a case reserved to the great day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be laid open; for I imagine it is beyond the power or judgment of man, in that variety of circumstances, in respect of parts, tempers, opportunities, helps, &c. men are in, in this world, to determine what is every one's duty in this great business of search, inquiry, examination; or to know when any one has done it. That which makes me believe you will be of this mind, is, that where you undertake for the success of this method, if rightly used, it is with a limitation, upon such as are not altogether incurable. So that when your remedy is prepared according to art, which art is yet unknown; and rightly

applied, and given in a due doſe, all which are ſecrets; it will then infallibly cure. Whom? All that are not incurable by it. And ſo will a pippin poſſet, eating fiſh in Lent, or a preſbyterian lecture, certainly cure all that are not incurable by them; for I am ſure you do not mean it will cure all, but thoſe who are abſolutely incurable; becauſe you yourſelf allow one means left of cure, when yours will not do, *viz.* the grace of God. Your words are, "what means is there left (except the grace of God) to reduce them, but lay thorns and briars in their way." And here alſo, in the place we were conſidering, you tell us, "the incurable are to be left to God." Whereby, if you mean they are to be left to thoſe means he has ordained for men's converſion and ſalvation, yours muſt never be made uſe of: for he indeed has preſcribed preaching and hearing of his word; but as for thoſe who will not hear, I do not find any where that he has commanded they ſhould be compelled or beaten to it.

There is a third thing that you are as tender and reſerved in, as either naming the criminals to be puniſhed, or poſitively telling us the end for which they ſhould be puniſhed: and that is with what ſort of penalties, what degree of puniſhment they ſhould be forced. You are indeed ſo gracious to them, that you renounce the ſeverities and penalties hitherto made uſe of. You tell us, they ſhould be but moderate penalties. But if we aſk you what are moderate penalties, you confeſs you cannot tell us. So that by moderate here you yet mean nothing. You tell us, "the outward force to be applied ſhould be duly tempered." But what that due temper is, you do not, or cannot ſay; and ſo in effect it ſignifies juſt nothing. Yet if in this you are not plain and direct, all the reſt of your deſign will ſignify nothing; for it being to have ſome men, and to ſome end, puniſhed; yet if it cannot be found what puniſhment is to be uſed, it is, notwithſtanding all you have ſaid, utterly uſeleſs. "You tell us modeſtly, that to determine "preciſely the juſt meaſure of the puniſhment, will require ſome conſideration." If the faults were preciſely

ciſely determined, and could be proved, it would require no more conſideration to determine the meaſure of the puniſhment, in this, than it would in any other caſe, where thoſe were known. But where the fault is undefined, and the guilt not to be proved, as I ſuppoſe it will be found in this preſent buſineſs of examining; it will without doubt require conſideration to proportion the force to the deſign. Juſt ſo much conſideration as it will require to fit a coat to the moon, or proportion a ſhoe to the feet of thoſe who inhabit her; for to proportion a puniſhment to a fault that you do not name, and ſo we in charity ought to think you do not yet know; and a fault that when you have named it, will be impoſſible to be proved who are or are not guilty of it; will I ſuppoſe require as much conſideration, as to fit a ſhoe to feet whoſe ſize and ſhape are not known.

However, you offer ſome meaſures whereby to regulate your puniſhments; which when they are looked into, will be found to be juſt as good as none; they being impoſſible to be any rule in the caſe. The firſt is "ſo much force, or ſuch penalties as are ordinarily "ſufficient to prevail with men of common diſcretion, "and not deſperately perverſe and obſtinate, to weigh "matters of religion carefully and impartially, and with-"out which ordinarily they will not do this." Where it is to be obſerved:

1. That who are theſe men of common diſcretion, is as hard to know, as to know what is a fit degree of puniſhment in the caſe; and ſo you do but regulate one uncertainty by another. Some men will be apt to think, that he who will not weigh matters of religion, which are of infinite concernment to him, without puniſhment, cannot in reaſon be thought a man of common diſcretion. Many women of common diſcretion enough to manage the ordinary affairs of their families, are not able to read a page in an ordinary author, or to underſtand and give an account what it means, when read to them. Many men of common diſcretion in their callings, are not able to judge when an argument is concluſive or no; much leſs to trace it through a long train

of

of conſequences. What penalties ſhall be ſufficient to prevail with ſuch, who upon examination, I fear, will not be found to make the leaſt part of mankind, to examine and weigh matters of religion carefully and impartially? The law allows all to have common diſcretion, for whom it has not provided guardians or bedlam; ſo that, in effect, your men of common diſcretion are all men, not judged idiots or madmen: and penalties ſufficient to prevail with all men of common diſcretion, are penalties ſufficient to prevail with all men, but idiots and madmen. Which what a meaſure it is to regulate penalties by, let all men of common diſcretion judge.

2. You may be pleaſed to conſider, that all men of the ſame degree of diſcretion, are not apt to be moved by the ſame degree of penalties. Some are of a more yielding, ſome of a more ſtiff temper; and what is ſufficient to prevail on one, is not half enough to move the other; though both men of common diſcretion: ſo that common diſcretion will be here of no uſe to determine the meaſure of puniſhment: eſpecially when in the ſame clauſe you except men deſperately perverſe and obſtinate, who are as hard to be known, as what you ſeek, *viz.* the juſt proportions of puniſhments neceſſary to prevail with men to conſider, examine, and weigh matters of religion; wherein, if a man tells you he has conſidered, he has weighed, he has examined, and ſo goes on in his former courſe; it is impoſſible for you ever to know whether he has done his duty, or whether he be deſperately perverſe and obſtinate; ſo that this exception ſignifies juſt nothing.

There are many things in your uſe of force and penalties, different from any I ever met with elſewhere.—One of them, this clauſe of yours concerning the meaſure of puniſhments, now under conſideration, offers me: wherein you proportion your puniſhments only to the yielding and corrigible, not to the perverſe and obſtinate; contrary to the common diſcretion which has hitherto made laws in other caſes, which levels the puniſhments againſt refractory offenders, and never ſpares them becauſe they are obſtinate. This, however, I will

not blame, as an overſight in you. Your new method, which aims at ſuch impracticable and inconſiſtent things as laws cannot bear, nor penalties be uſeful to, forced you to it. The uſeleſsneſs, abſurdity, and unreaſonableneſs of great ſeverities, you had acknowledged in the foregoing paragraphs. Diſſenters you would have brought to conſider by moderate penalties. They lie under them; but whether they have conſidered or no, (for that you cannot tell) they ſtill continue diſſenters. What is to be done now? Why, the incurable are to be left to God, as you tell us, p. 12. Your puniſhments were not meant to prevail on the deſperately perverſe and obſtinate, as you tell us here; and ſo whatever be the ſucceſs, your puniſhments are however juſtified.

You have given us in another place ſomething like another boundary to your moderate penalties: but when examined, it proves juſt like the reſt, trifling only, in good words, ſo put together as to have no direct meaning; an art very much in uſe amongſt ſome ſort of learned men. The words are theſe: "ſuch penalties "as may not tempt perſons who have any concern for "their eternal ſalvation, (and thoſe who have none, "ought not to be conſidered) to renounce a religion "which they believe to be true, or profeſs one which "they do not believe to be ſo." If by any concern, you mean a true concern for their eternal ſalvation, by this rule you may make your puniſhments as great as you pleaſe; and all the ſeverities you have diſclaimed may be brought in play again: for none of thoſe will be able to make a man, "who is truly concerned for "his eternal ſalvation, renounce a religion he believes "to be true, or profeſs one he does not believe to be "ſo." If by thoſe who have any concern, you mean ſuch who have ſome faint wiſhes for happineſs hereafter, and would be glad to have things go well with them in the other world, but will venture nothing in this world for it; theſe the moderateſt puniſhments you can imagine, will make change their religion. If by any concern, you mean whatever may be between theſe two; the degrees are ſo infinite, that to proportion your

your punishments by that, is to have no measure of them at all.

One thing I cannot but take notice of in this passage, before I leave it: and that is, that you say here, "those who have no concern for their salvation, de- "serve not to be considered." In other parts of your letter, you pretend to have compassion on the careless, and provide remedies for them: but here, of a sudden, your charity fails you; and you give them up to eternal perdition, without the least regard, the least pity, and say they deserve not to be considered. Our Saviour's rule was, "the sick and not the whole need a physici- "an." Your rule here is, those that are careless, are not to be considered, but are to be left to themselves. This would seem strange, if one did not observe what drew you to it. You perceived that if the magistrate was to use no punishments but such as would make nobody change their religion, he was to use none at all: for the careless would be brought to the national church, with any slight punishments; and when they are once there, you are, it seems, satisfied, and look no farther after them. So that by your own measures, "if the "careless, and those who have no concern for their "eternal salvation," are to be regarded and taken care of; if the salvation of their souls is to be promoted, there is to be no punishment used at all; and therefore you leave them out as not to be considered.

There remains yet one thing to be inquired into, concerning the measure of the punishments, and that is the length of their duration. Moderate punishments that are continued, that men find no end of, know no way out of, sit heavy, and become immoderately uneasy. Dissenters, you would have punished, to make them consider. Your penalties have had the effect on them you intended; they have made them consider; and they have done their utmost in considering. What now must be done with them? They must be punished on; for they are still dissenters. If it were just, if you had reason at first to punish a dissenter, to make him consider, when you did not know but that he had considered already;

ready; it is as just, and you have as much reason to punish him on, even when he has performed what your punishments were designed for, when he has considered, but yet remains a dissenter. For I may justly suppose, and you must grant, that a man may remain a dissenter, after all the consideration your moderate penalties can bring him to; when we see greater punishments, even those severities you disown, as too great, are not able to make men consider so far as to be convinced, and brought over to the national church.

If your punishments may not be inflicted on men, to make them consider, who have or may have considered already for aught you know; then dissenters are never to be once punished, no more than any other sort of men. If dissenters are to be punished, to make them consider, whether they have considered or no; then their punishments, though they do consider, must never cease, as long as they are dissenters; which whether it be to punish them only to bring them to consider, let all men judge. This I am sure; punishments, in your method, must either never begin upon dissenters, or never cease. And so pretend moderation as you please, the punishments which your method requires, must be either very immoderate, or none at all.

And now, you having yielded to our author, and that upon very good reasons which you yourself urge, and which I shall set down in your own words "that to "prosecute men with fire and sword, or to deprive "them of their estates, to maim them with corporal "punishments, to starve and torture them in noisom "prisons, and in the end even to take away their lives, "to make them christians, is but an ill way of expres-"sing men's desire of the salvation of those whom they "treat in this manner. And that it will be very dif-"ficult to persuade men of sense, that he who with "dry eyes and satisfaction of mind can deliver his bro-"ther to the executioner, to be burnt alive, does sin-"cerely and heartily concern himself to save that bro-"ther from the flames of hell in the world to come. "And that these methods are so very improper, in re-"spect to the design of them, that they usually pro-

duce

" duce the quite contrary effect. For whereas all the " uſe which force can have for the advancing true re- " ligion, and the ſalvation of ſouls, is (as has already " been ſhowed) by diſpoſing men to ſubmit to inſtruc- " tion, and to give a fair hearing to the reaſons which " are offered, for the enlightening their minds, and " diſcovering the truth to them; theſe cruelties have " the misfortune to be commonly looked upon as ſo " juſt a prejudice againſt any religion that uſes them, " as makes it needleſs to look any farther into it; and " to tempt men to reject it, as both falſe and deteſ- " table, without ever vouchſafing to conſider the rati- " onal grounds and motives of it. This effect they " ſeldom fail to work upon the ſufferers of them; and " as to the ſpectators, if they be not before-hand well " inſtructed in thoſe grounds and motives, they will be " much tempted likewiſe, not only to entertain the " ſame opinion of ſuch a religion, but withal to judge " much more favourably of that of the ſufferers; who, " they will be apt to think, would not expoſe them- " ſelves to ſuch extremities, which they might avoid " by compliance, if they were not thoroughly ſatisfied " of the juſtice of their cauſe." And upon theſe rea- ſons you conclude, " that theſe ſeverities are utterly " unapt and improper for the bringing men to embrace " that truth which muſt ſave them." Again, you " having acknowledged, that the authority of the " magiſtrate is not an authority to compel any one to " his religion." And again, " that the rigour of laws " and force of penalties are not capable to convince " and change men's minds." And yet farther, " that " you do not require that men ſhould have no rule, " but the religion of the court; or that they ſhould be " put under a neceſſity to quit the light of their own " reaſon, and oppoſe the dictates of their own conſci- " ences, and blindly reſign up themſelves to the will " of their governors; but that the power you aſcribe " to the magiſtrate, is given him to bring men not to " his own, but to the true religion." Now you hav- ing, I ſay, granted this, whereby you directly condemn " and aboliſh all laws that have been made here, or

any

any where elſe, that ever I heard of, to compel men to conformity; I think the author, and whoſoever elſe are moſt for liberty of conſcience, might be content with the toleration you allow, by condemning the laws about religion, now in force; and are teſtified, until you had made your new method conſiſtent and practicable, by telling the world plainly and directly,

1. Who are to be puniſhed.
2. For what.
3. With what puniſhments.
4. How long.
5. What advantage to true religion it would be, if magiſtrates every-where did ſo puniſh.
6. And laſtly, whence the magiſtrate had commiſſion to do ſo.

When you have done this plainly and intelligibly, without keeping in the uncertainty of general expreſſions, and without ſuppoſing all along your church in the right, and your religion the true; which can no more be allowed to you in this caſe, whatever your church or religion be, than it can be to a papiſt or a lutheran, a preſbyterian or an anabaptiſt; nay no more to you, than it can be allowed to a jew or a mahometan; when, I ſay, you have by ſettling theſe points framed the parts of your new engine, ſet it together, and ſhowed that it will work, without doing more harm than good in the world; I think then men may be content to ſubmit to it. But imagining this, and an engine to ſhow the perpetual motion, will be found out together, I think toleration in a very good ſtate, notwithſtanding your anſwer; wherein you have ſaid ſo much for it, and for aught I ſee nothing againſt it; unleſs an impracticable chimera be, in your opinion, ſomething mightily to be apprehended.

We have now ſeen and examined the main of your treatiſe; and therefore I think I might here end, without going any farther. But, that you may not think yourſelf, or any of your arguments neglected, I will go over the remainder, and give you my thoughts on every thing I ſhall meet with in it, that ſeems to need any anſwer. In one place you argue againſt the author thus:

thus: "if then the author's fourth propoſition," as you call it, viz. That force is of no uſe for promoting true religion and the ſalvation of ſouls, "be not true (as "perhaps by this time it appears it is not) then the "laſt propoſition, which is built upon it, muſt fall with "it:" which laſt propoſition is this, viz. "that no-"body can have any right to uſe any outward force or "compulſion to bring men to the true religion, and ſo "to ſalvation." If this propoſition were built, as you allege, upon that which you call his fourth, then indeed if the fourth fell, this built upon it would fall with it. But that not being the author's propoſition, as I have ſhowed, nor this built wholly on it, but on other reaſons, as I have already proved, and any one may ſee in ſeveral parts of his letter, particularly p. 351, 352, what you allege falls of itſelf.

The buſineſs of the next paragraph is to prove, That if "force be uſeful, then ſomebody muſt certainly have "a right to uſe it." The firſt argument you go about to prove it by, is this, "That uſefulneſs is as good an "argument to prove there is ſomewhere a right to uſe "it, as uſeleſſneſs is to prove no-body has ſuch a right." If you conſider the things of whoſe uſefulneſs or uſeleſſneſs we are ſpeaking, you will perhaps be of another mind. It is puniſhment, or force uſed in puniſhing. Now all puniſhment is ſome evil, ſome inconvenience, ſome ſuffering; by taking away or abridging ſome good thing, which he who is puniſhed has otherwiſe a right to. Now to juſtify the bringing any ſuch evil upon any man, two things are requiſite. Firſt, That he who does it has commiſſion and power ſo to do. Secondly, That it be directly uſeful for the procuring ſome greater good. Whatever puniſhment one man uſes to another, without theſe two conditions, whatever he may pretend, proves an injury and injuſtice, and ſo of right ought to have been let alone. And therefore, though uſefulneſs, which is one of the conditions that makes puniſhments juſt, when it is away, may hinder puniſhments from being lawful in any body's hands; yet uſefulneſs, when preſent, being but one of thoſe conditions, cannot give the other, which is a commiſſion to puniſh; without which

which alſo puniſhment is unlawful. From whence it follows, That though uſeleſs puniſhment be unlawful from any hand, yet uſeful puniſhment from every hand is not lawful. A man may have the ſtone, and it may be uſeful, more than indirectly, and at a diſtance uſeful, to him to be cut; but yet this uſefulneſs will not juſtify the moſt ſkilful ſurgeon in the world, by force to make him endure the pain and hazard of cutting; becauſe he has no commiſſion, no right without the patient's own conſent to do ſo. Nor is it a good argument, cutting will be uſeful to him, therefore there is a right ſomewhere to cut him, whether he will or no. Much leſs will there be an argument for any right, if there be only a poſſibility that it may prove uſeful indirectly and by accident.

Your other argument is this: If force or puniſhment be of neceſſary uſe, "then it muſt be acknowledged, "that there is a right ſomewhere to uſe it; unleſs we "will ſay (what without impiety cannot be ſaid) that "the wiſe and benign diſpoſer and governor of all things "has not furniſhed mankind with competent means for "the promoting his own honour in the world, and the "good of ſouls." If your way of arguing be true, it is demonſtration, that force is not of neceſſary uſe. For I argue thus, in your form: We muſt acknowledge force not to be of neceſſary uſe; "unleſs we will ſay (what "without impiety cannot be ſaid) that the wiſe diſ-"poſer and governor of all things did not, for above "three hundred years after Chriſt, furniſh his church "with competent means for promoting his own honour "in the world, and the good of ſouls." It is for you to conſider whether theſe arguments be concluſive or no. This I am ſure, the one is as concluſive as the other. But if your ſuppoſed uſefulneſs places a right ſomewhere to uſe it, pray tell me in whoſe hands it places it in Turky, Perſia, or China, or any country where chriſtians of different churches live under a heathen or mahometan ſovereign? And if you cannot tell me in whoſe hands it places it there, as I believe you will find it pretty hard to do; there are then, it ſeems, ſome places where, upon your ſuppoſition of the neceſ-

ſary uſefulneſs of force, " the wiſe and benign governor " and diſpoſer of all things has not furniſhed men with " competent means for promoting his own honour and " the good of ſouls;" unleſs you will grant, that the " wiſe and benign diſpoſer and governor of all things " hath, for the promoting of his honour and the good " of ſouls, placed a power in mahometan or heathen " princes to puniſh chriſtians, to bring them to conſi- " der reaſons and arguments proper to convince them." But this is the advantage of ſo fine an invention, as that of force doing ſome ſervice indirectly and at a diſtance; which uſefulneſs, if we may believe you, places a right in mahometan or pagan princes hands, to uſe force upon chriſtians; for fear leſt mankind in thoſe countries ſhould be unfurniſhed with means for the promoting God's honour and the good of ſouls. For thus you argue: " if there be ſo great uſe of force, then there " is a right ſomewhere to uſe it. And if there be ſuch " a right ſomewhere, where ſhould it be but in the civil " ſovereign?" Who can deny now, but that you have taken care, great care, for the promoting of truth and the chriſtian religion? But yet it is as hard for me, I confeſs, and I believe for others, to conceive how you ſhould think to do any ſervice to truth, and the chriſtian religion, by putting a right into mahometans or heathens hands to puniſh chriſtians; as it was for you to conceive how the author ſhould think " to do any ſer- " vice to the truth, and the chriſtian religion," by exempting the profeſſors of it from puniſhment everywhere, ſince there are more pagan, mahometan, and erroneous princes in the world, than orthodox; truth, and the chriſtian religion, taking the world as we find it, is ſure to be more puniſhed and ſuppreſſed, than errour and falſhood.

The author having endeavoured to ſhow that no-body at all, of any rank or condition, had a power to puniſh, torment, or uſe any man ill, for matters of religion; you tell us " you do not yet underſtand, why clergy- " men are not as capable of ſuch power as other men." I do not remember that the author any where, by excepting eccleſiaſtics more than others, gave you any occaſion

caſion to ſhow your concern in this point. Had he foreſeen that this would have touched you ſo nearly, and that you ſet your heart ſo much upon the clergy's power of puniſhing; it is like he would have told you, he thought eccleſiaſtics as capable of it as any men; and that if forwardneſs and diligence in the exerciſe of ſuch power may recommend any to it, clergymen in the opinion of the world ſtand faireſt for it. However, you do well to put in your claim for them, though the author excludes them no more than their neighbours. Nay, they muſt be allowed the pretence of the faireſt title. For I never read of any ſeverities that were to bring men to Chriſt, but thoſe of the law of Moſes; which is therefore called a pedagogue, (Gal. iii. 24.) And the next verſe tells us, that "after that faith is come, we are no "longer under a ſchoolmaſter." But yet if we are ſtill to be driven to Chriſt by a rod, I ſhall not envy them the pleaſure of wielding it: only I deſire them, when they have got the ſcourge into their hands, to remember our Saviour, and follow his example, who never uſed it but once; and that they would, like him, employ it only to drive vile and ſcandalous traffickers for the things of this world, out of their church, rather than to drive whoever they can into it. Whether the latter be not a proper method to make their church what our Saviour there pronounced of the temple, they who uſe it were beſt look. For in matters of religion, none are ſo eaſy to be driven, as thoſe who have nothing of religion at all; and next to them, the vicious, the ignorant, the worldling, and the hypocrite; who care for no more of religion but the name, nor no more of any church, but its proſperity and power: and who, not unlike thoſe deſcribed by our Saviour, (Luke xx. 47.) for a ſhow come to, or cry up the prayers of the church, "that they may devour widows, and other helpleſs peo-"ple's houſes." I ſay not this of the ſerious profeſſors of any church, who are in earneſt in matters of religion. Such I value, who conſcientiouſly, and out of a ſincere perſuaſion, embrace any religion, though different from mine, and in a way, I think, miſtaken. But no-body can have reaſon to think otherwiſe than what

I have ſaid, of thoſe who are wrought upon to be of any church, by ſecular hopes and fears. Thoſe truly place trade above all other conſiderations, and merchandize with religion itſelf, who regulate their choice by worldly profit and loſs.

You endeavour to prove, againſt the author, that civil ſociety is not inſtituted only for civil ends, i. e. the procuring, preſerving, and advancing men's civil intereſts: your words are: "I muſt ſay, that our author does but beg the queſtion, when he affirms that the commonwealth is conſtituted only for the procuring, preſerving, and advancing of the civil intereſts of the members of it. That commonwealths are inſtituted for theſe ends, no man will deny. But if there be any other ends beſides theſe, attainable by the civil ſociety and government, there is no reaſon to affirm, that theſe are the only ends for which they are deſigned. Doubtleſs commonwealths are inſtituted for the attaining of all the benefits which political government can yield. And therefore, if the ſpiritual and eternal intereſts of men may any way be procured or advanced by political government, the procuring and advancing thoſe intereſts muſt in all reaſon be reckoned among the ends of civil ſocieties, and ſo, conſequently, fall within the compaſs of the magiſtrate's juriſdiction." I have ſet down your words at large, to let the reader ſee, that you of all men had the leaſt reaſon to tell the author, he does but beg the queſtion; unleſs you mean to juſtify yourſelf by the pretence of his example. You argue thus, "If there be any other ends attainable by civil ſociety, then civil intereſts are not the only ends for which commonwealths are inſtituted." And how do you prove there be other ends? Why thus, "Doubtleſs commonwealths are inſtituted for the attaining of all the benefits which political government can yield." Which is as clear a demonſtration, as doubtleſs can make it to be. The queſtion is, whether civil ſociety be inſtituted only for civil ends? You ſay, no; and your proof is, becauſe doubtleſs it is inſtituted for other ends. If I now ſay, doubtleſs this is a good argument;

is

is not every one bound without more ado to admit it for such? If not, doubtless you are in danger to be thought to beg the question.

But notwithstanding you say here, that the author begs the question; in the following page you tell us, "That the author offers three considerations which seem "to him abundantly to demonstrate, that the civil power "neither can, nor ought in any manner to be extended "to the salvation of souls." He does not then beg the question. For the question being, "Whether civil "interest be the only end of civil society," he gives this reason for the negative, "That civil power has no-"thing to do with the salvation of souls;" and offers three considerations for the proof of it. For it will always be a good consequence, that, if the civil power has nothing to do with the salvation of souls, "then "civil interest is the only end of civil society." And the reason of it is plain; because a man having no other interest, but either in this world or the world to come; if the end of civil society reach not to a man's interest in the other world, all which is comprehended in the salvation of his soul, it is plain that the sole end of civil society is civil interest, under which the author comprehends the good things of this world.

And now let us examine the truth of your main position, viz. "That civil society is instituted for the at-"taining all the benefits that it may any way yield." Which, if true, then this position must be true, viz. "That all societies whatsoever are instituted for the at-"taining all the benefits that they may any way yield;" there being nothing peculiar to civil society in the case, why that society should be instituted for the attaining all the benefits it can any way yield, and other societies not. By which argument it will follow, that all societies are instituted for one and the same end: i. e. "for "the attaining all the benefits that they can any way "yield." By which account there will be no difference between church and state; a commonwealth and an army; or between a family, and the East-India company; all which have hitherto been thought distinct sorts of societies, instituted for different ends. If your

hypotheſis hold good, one of the ends of the family muſt be to preach the goſpel, and adminiſter the ſacraments; and one buſineſs of an army to teach languages, and propagate religion; becauſe theſe are benefits ſome way or other attainable by thoſe ſocieties: unleſs you take want of commiſſion and authority to be a ſufficient impediment: and that will be ſo too in other caſes.

It is a benefit to have true knowledge and philoſophy embraced and aſſented to, in any civil ſociety or government. But will you ſay, therefore, that it is a benefit to the ſociety, or one of the ends of government, that all who are not peripatetics ſhould be puniſhed, to make men find out the truth, and profeſs it. This indeed might be thought a fit way to make ſome men embrace the peripatetic philoſophy, but not a proper way to find the truth. For perhaps the peripatetic phi- philoſophy may not be true; perhaps a great many may have not time, nor parts to ſtudy it; perhaps a great many who have ſtudied it, cannot be convinced of the truth of it: and therefore it cannot be a benefit to the commonwealth, nor one of the ends of it, that theſe members of the ſociety ſhould be diſturbed, and diſeaſed to no purpoſe, when they are guilty of no fault. For juſt the ſame reaſon, it cannot be a benefit to civil ſociety, that men ſhould be puniſhed in Denmark, for not being lutherans; in Geneva, for not being calviniſts; and in Vienna, for not being papiſts; as a means to make them find out the true religion. For ſo, upon your grounds, men muſt be treated in thoſe places, as well as in England, for not being of the church of England. And then I beſeech you, conſider the great benefit will accrue to men in ſociety by this method; and I ſuppoſe it will be a hard thing for you to prove, that ever civil governments were inſtituted to puniſh men for not being of this, or that ſect in religion; however by accident, indirectly and at a diſtance, it may be an occaſion to one perhaps of a thouſand, or an hundred, to ſtudy that controverſy, which is all you expect from it. If it be a benefit, pray tell me what benefit it is. A civil benefit it cannot be. For men's civil intereſts are diſturbed, injured, and impaired by it.

And

And what ſpiritual benefit that can be to any multitude of men, to be puniſhed for diſſenting from a falſe or erroneous profeſſion, I would have you find out: unleſs it be a ſpiritual benefit to be in danger to be driven into a wrong way. For if in all differing ſects, all but one is in the wrong, it is a hundred to one but that from which one diſſents, and is puniſhed for diſſenting from, is the wrong.

I grant it is paſt doubt, that the nature of man is ſo covetous of good, that no one would have excluded from any action he does, or from any inſtitution he is concerned in, any manner of good or benefit that it might any way yield. And if this be your meaning, it will not be denied you. But then you ſpeak very improperly, or rather very miſtakenly, if you call ſuch benefits as may any way, i. e. indirectly, and at a diſtance, or by accident, be attained by civil or any other ſociety, the ends for which it is inſtituted. Nothing can "in reaſon be reckoned amongſt the ends of any ſoci-"ety," but what may in reaſon be ſuppoſed to be deſigned by thoſe who enter into it. Now no-body can in reaſon ſuppoſe, that any one entered into civil ſociety for the procuring, ſecuring, or advancing the ſalvation of his ſoul; when he, for that end, needed not the force of civil ſociety. "The procuring, therefore, "ſecuring, and advancing the ſpiritual and eternal in-"tereſt of men, cannot in reaſon be reckoned amongſt "the ends of civil ſocieties;" though perhaps it might ſo fall out, that in ſome particular inſtance, ſome man's ſpiritual intereſt might be advanced by your or any other way of applying civil force. A nobleman, whoſe chapel is decayed or fallen, may make uſe of his dining-room for praying and preaching. Yet whatever benefit were attainable by this uſe of the room, no-body can in reaſon reckon this among the ends for which it was built; no more than the accidental breeding of ſome bird in any part of it, though it were a benefit it yielded, could in reaſon be reckoned among the ends of building the houſe.

But, ſay you, "doubtleſs commonwealths are inſti-"tuted for the attaining of all the benefits which poli-"tical

" tical government can yield; and therefore if the ſpi-
" ritual and eternal intereſts of men may any way be
" procured or advanced by political government, the
" procuring and advancing thoſe intereſts, muſt in all
" reaſon be reckoned amongſt the ends of civil ſociety,
" and ſo conſequently fall within the compaſs of the
" magiſtrate's juriſdiction." Upon the ſame grounds, I thus reaſon: Doubtleſs churches are inſtituted for the attaining of all the benefits which eccleſiaſtical government can yield: and therefore, if the temporal and ſecular intereſts of men may any way be procured or advanced by eccleſiaſtical polity, the procuring and advancing thoſe intereſts muſt in all reaſon be reckoned among the ends of religious ſocieties, and ſo conſequently fall within the compaſs of churchmen's juriſdiction. The church of Rome has openly made its advantage of " ſecular intereſts to be procured or ad-
" vanced, indirectly, and at a diſtance, and in ordine
" ad ſpiritualia;" all which ways, if I miſtake not Engliſh, are comprehended under your " any way." But I do not remember that any of the reformed churches have hitherto directly profeſſed it. But there is a time for all things. And if the commonwealth once invades the ſpiritual ends of the church, by meddling with the ſalvation of ſouls, which ſhe has always been ſo tender of, who can deny, that the church ſhould have liberty to make herſelf ſome amends by repriſals?

But, ſir, however you and I may argue from wrong ſuppoſitions, yet unleſs the apoſtle, Eph. iv. where he reckons up the church-officers which Chriſt hath inſtituted in his church, had told us they were for ſome other ends than " for the perfecting of the ſaints, for
" the work of the miniſtry, for the edifying of the body
" of Chriſt;" the advancing of their ſecular intereſts will ſcarce be allowed to be their buſineſs, or within the compaſs of their juriſdiction. Nor till it can be ſhown that civil ſociety is inſtituted for ſpiritual ends, or that the magiſtrate has commiſſion to interpoſe his authority, or uſe force in matters of religion; your ſuppoſition " of ſpiritual benefits indirectly and at a diſ-
" tance attainable" by political government, will never prove

prove the advancing of thoſe intereſts by force to be the magiſtrate's buſineſs, " and to fall within the com-" paſs of his juriſdiction." And till then, the force of the arguments which the author has brought againſt it, in the 319th and following pages of his letter, will hold good.

Commonwealths, or civil ſocieties and governments, if you will believe the judicious Mr. Hooker, are, as St. Peter calls them, (1 Pet. ii. 13.) ἀνθρωπίνη κτίσις, the contrivance and inſtitution of man; and he ſhows there for what end; viz. " for the puniſhment of evil-doers, " and the praiſe of them that do well." I do not find any where, that it is for the puniſhment of thoſe who are not in church-communion with the magiſtrate, to make them ſtudy controverſies in religion, or hearken to thoſe who will tell them " they have miſtaken their " way, and offer to ſhow them the right one." You muſt ſhow them ſuch a commiſſion, if you ſay it is from God. And in all ſocieties inſtituted by man, the ends of them can be no other than what the inſtitutors appointed; which I am ſure could not be their ſpiritual and eternal intereſt. For they could not ſtipulate about theſe one with another, nor ſubmit this intereſt to the power of the ſociety, or any ſovereign they ſhould ſet over it. There are nations in the Weſt-Indies, which have no other end of their ſociety, but their mutual defence againſt their common enemies. In theſe, their captain, or prince, is ſovereign commander in time of war; but in time of peace, neither he nor any body elſe has any authority over any of the ſociety. You cannot deny but other, even temporal ends, are attainable by theſe commonwealths, if they had been otherwiſe inſtituted and appointed to theſe ends. But all your ſaying, " doubtleſs commonwealths are inſtituted for the " attaining of all the benefits which they can yield," will not give authority to any one, or more, in ſuch a ſociety, by political government or force, to procure directly or indirectly other benefits than that for which it was inſtituted: and therefore there it falls not within the compaſs of thoſe princes juriſdiction to puniſh any one of the ſociety for injuring another; becauſe he has no

no commiſſion ſo to do; whatever reaſon you may think there is, that that ſhould be reckoned amongſt the ends of their ſociety.

But to conclude: your argument has that defect in it which turns it upon yourſelf. And that is, that the procuring and advancing the ſpiritual and eternal intereſts of ſouls, your way, is not a benefit to the ſociety: and ſo upon your own ſuppoſition, "the procuring and "advancing the ſpiritual intereſt of ſouls, any way, "cannot be one of the ends of civil ſociety;" unleſs the procuring and advancing the ſpiritual intereſt of ſouls, in a way proper to do more harm than good towards the ſalvation of ſouls, be to be accounted ſuch a benefit as to be one of the ends of civil ſocieties. For that yours is ſuch a way, I have proved already. So that were it hard to prove that political government, whoſe only inſtrument is force, could no way by force, however applied, more advance than hinder the ſpiritual and eternal intereſt of men; yet having proved it againſt your particular new way of applying force, I have ſufficiently vindicated the author's doctrine from any thing you have ſaid againſt it. Which is enough for my preſent purpoſe.

Your next page tells us, that this reaſoning of the author, viz. "that the power of the magiſtrate cannot "be extended to the ſalvation of ſouls, becauſe the "care of ſouls is not committed to the magiſtrate; is "proving the thing by itſelf." As if you ſhould ſay, when I tell you that you could not extend your power to meddle with the money of a young gentleman you travelled with, as tutor, becauſe the care of his money was not committed to you, were proving the thing by itſelf. For it is not neceſſary that you ſhould have the power of his money; it may be intruſted to a ſteward who travels with him; or it may be left to himſelf. If you have it, it is but a delegated power. And, in all delegated powers, I thought this a fair proof: you have it not, or cannot uſe it, which is what the author means here by extended to, becauſe it is not committed to you. In the ſumming up of this argument, (p. 326.) the author ſays, "no-body therefore, in fine, neither com-

"monwealths,

" monwealths, &c. hath any title to invade the civil " rights and worldly goods of another, upon pretence " of religion." Which is an expoſition of what he means in the beginning of the argument, by " the ma- " giſtrate's power cannot be extended to the ſalvation " of ſouls." So that if we take theſe laſt cited words equivalent to thoſe in the former place, his proof will ſtand thus, " the magiſtrate has no title to invade the " civil rights or worldly goods of any one, upon pre- " tence of religion; becauſe the care of ſouls is not " committed to him." This is the ſame in the author's ſenſe with the former. And whether either this, or that, be a proving the ſame thing by itſelf, we muſt leave to others to judge.

You quote the author's argument, which he brings to prove that the care of ſouls is not committed to the magiſtrate, in theſe words; " it is not committed to him " by God, becauſe it appears not that God has ever " given any ſuch authority to one man over another, " as to compel any one to his religion." This, when firſt I read it, I confeſs, I thought a good argument. But you ſay, " this is quite beſide the buſineſs;" and the reaſon you give, is, " for the authority of the ma- " giſtrate is not an authority to compel any to his reli- " gion, but only an authority to procure all his ſub- " jects the means of diſcovering the way of ſalvation, " and to procure withal, as much as in him lies, that " none remain ignorant of it," &c. I fear, ſir, you for- get yourſelf. The author was not writing againſt your new hypotheſis, before it was known in the world. He may be excuſed if he had not the gift of prophecy, to argue againſt a notion which was not yet ſtarted. He had in view only the laws hitherto made, and the pu- niſhments, in matters of religion, in uſe in the world. The penalties, as I take it, are lain on men for being of different ways of religion. Which, what is it other, but to compel them to relinquiſh their own, and to conform themſelves to that from which they differ? If this be not to compel them to the magiſtrate's religion, pray tell us what is? This muſt be neceſſarily ſo un- derſtood; unleſs it can be ſuppoſed that the law intends not

not to have that done, which with penalties it commands to be done; or that punishments are not compulsion, not that compulsion the author complains of. The law says, "do this and live;" embrace this doctrine, conform to this way of worship, and be at ease, and free; or else be fined, imprisoned, banished, burned. If you can show among the laws that have been made in England, concerning religion, and I think I may say any where else, any one that punishes men "for not having impartially examined the religion they "have embraced, or refused," I think I may yield you the cause. Law-makers have been generally wiser than to make laws that could not be executed: and therefore their laws were against non-conformists, which could be known; and not for impartial examination, which could not. It was not then besides the author's business, to bring an argument against the persecutions here in fashion. He did not know that any one, who was so free as to acknowledge that "the magistrate has "not authority to compel any one to his religion," and thereby at once, as you have done, give up all the laws now in force against dissenters; had yet rods in store for them, and by a new trick would bring them under the lash of the law, when the old pretences were too much exploded to serve any longer. Have you never heard of such a thing as the religion established by law? Which is, it seems, the lawful religion of a country, and to be complied with as such. There being such things, such notions yet in the world, it was not quite besides the author's business to allege, that "God "never gave such authority to one man over another "as to compel any one to his religion." I will grant, if you please, "religion established by law" is a pretty odd way of speaking in the mouth of a christian; and yet it is much in fashion: as if the magistrate's authority could add any force or sanction to any religion, whether true or false. I am glad to find you have so far considered the magistrate's authority, that you agree with the author, that "he hath none to compel men "to his religion." Much less can he, by any establishment

bliſhment of law, add any thing to the truth or validity of his own, or any religion whatſoever.

It remains now to examine, whether the author's argument will not hold good, even againſt puniſhments in your way; "for if the magiſtrate's authority be, as "you here ſay, only to procure all his ſubjects, (mark "what you ſay ALL HIS SUBJECTS) the means of diſco- "vering the way of ſalvation, and to procure withal, "as much as in him lies, that NONE remain ignorant of "it, or refuſe to embrace it, either for want of uſing "thoſe means, or by reaſon of any ſuch prejudices as "may render them ineffectual." If this be the magiſtrate's buſineſs, in reference to ALL HIS SUBJECTS, I deſire you, or any man elſe, to tell me how this can be done by the application of force only to a part of them; unleſs you will ſtill vainly ſuppoſe ignorance, negligence, or prejudice, only amongſt that part which any where differs from the magiſtrate. If thoſe of the magiſtrate's church may be ignorant of the way of ſalvation; if it be poſſible there may be amongſt them thoſe "who refuſe to embrace it, either for want of uſing "thoſe means, or by reaſon of any ſuch prejudices as "may render them ineffectual:" What, in this caſe, becomes of the magiſtrate's authority to procure all his ſubjects the means of diſcovering the way of ſalvation? Muſt theſe of his ſubjects be neglected, and left without the means he has authority to procure them? Or muſt he uſe force upon them too? And then, pray, ſhow me how this can be done. Shall the magiſtrate puniſh thoſe of his own religion, "to procure them the means "of diſcovering the way of ſalvation, and to procure "as much as in him lies, that they remain not igno- "rant of it, or refuſe not to embrace it?" Theſe are ſuch contradictions in practice, this is ſuch condemnation of a man's own religion, as no one can expect from the magiſtrate; and I dare ſay you deſire not of him. And yet this is that he muſt do, "if his authority be "to procure all his ſubjects the means of diſcovering "the way to ſalvation." And if it be ſo needful, as you ſay it is, that he ſhould uſe it, I am ſure force cannot do that till it be applied wider, and puniſhment be laid

laid upon more than you would have it; for "if the "magiſtrate be by force to procure, as much as in him "lies, that none remain ignorant of the way of ſalva-"tion;" muſt he not puniſh all thoſe who are ignorant of the way of ſalvation? And pray tell me how this is any way practicable, but by ſuppoſing none in the national church ignorant, and all out of it ignorant of the way of ſalvation. Which, what is it, but to puniſh men barely for not being of the magiſtrate's religion; the very thing you deny he has authority to do? So that the magiſtrate having, by your own confeſſion, no authority thus to uſe force; and it being otherways impracticable "for the procuring all his ſubjects the "means of diſcovering the way of ſalvation;" there is an end of force. And ſo force being laid aſide, either as unlawful, or impracticable, the author's argument holds good againſt force, even in your way of applying it.

But if you ſay, as you do in the foregoing page, that the magiſtrate has authority "to lay ſuch penalties upon "thoſe who refuſe to embrace the doctrine of the pro-"per miniſters of religion, and to ſubmit to their ſpi-"ritual government, as to make them bethink them-"ſelves ſo as not to be alienated from the truth: (for, "as for fooliſh humour, and uncharitable prejudice," &c. which are but words of courſe that oppoſite parties give one another, as marks of diſlike and preſumption, I omit them, as ſignifying nothing to the queſtion; being ſuch as will with the ſame reaſon be retorted by the other ſide;) againſt that alſo the author's argument holds, that the magiſtrate has no ſuch authority. 1. Becauſe God never gave the magiſtrate an authority to be judge of truth for another man in matters of religion: and ſo he cannot be judge whether any man be alienated from the truth or no. 2. Becauſe the magiſtrate had never authority given him "to lay any "penalties on thoſe who refuſe to embrace the doctrine "of the proper miniſters of his religion, or of any "other, or to ſubmit to their ſpiritual government," more than on any other men.

To

To the author's argument, that the magiſtrate cannot receive ſuch authority from the people; becauſe no man has power to leave it to the choice of any other man to chooſe a religion for him; you give this pleaſant anſwer: "As the power of the magiſtrate, in reference to religion, is ordained for the bringing men "to take ſuch care as they ought of their ſalvation, "that they may not blindly leave it to the choice, neither of any other perſon, nor yet of their own luſts "and paſſions, to preſcribe to them what faith or worſhip they ſhall embrace: ſo if we ſuppoſe this power "to be veſted in the magiſtrate by the conſent of the "people; this will not import their abandoning the "care of their ſalvation, but rather the contrary. For "if men, in chooſing their religion, are ſo generally "ſubject, as has been ſhowed, when left wholly to "themſelves, to be ſo much ſwayed by prejudice and "paſſion, as either not at all, or not ſufficient to regard the reaſons and motives which ought alone to "determine their choice; then it is every man's true "intereſt, not to be left wholly to himſelf in this matter; but that care ſhould be taken, that, in an affair of ſo vaſt concernment to him, he may be brought "even againſt his own inclination, if it cannot be done "otherwiſe, (which is ordinarily the caſe) to act according to reaſon and ſound judgment. And then "what better courſe can men take to provide for this, "than by veſting the power I have deſcribed, in him "who bears the ſword?"—Wherein I beſeech you conſider, 1. Whether it be not pleaſant, that you ſay—"the power of the magiſtrate is ordained to bring men "to take ſuch care;" and thence infer, "Then it is "every one's intereſt to veſt ſuch power in the magiſtrate?" For if it be the power of the magiſtrate, it is his. And what need the people veſt it in him, unleſs there be need, and it be the beſt courſe they can take, to veſt a power in the magiſtrate, which he has already? 2. Another pleaſant thing you here ſay, is, "That the power of the magiſtrate is to bring men to "ſuch a care of their ſalvation, that they may not "blindly leave it to the choice of any perſon, or their "own

" own luſts, or paſſions, to preſcribe to them what faith " or worſhip they ſhall embrace; and yet that it is their " beſt courſe to veſt a power in the magiſtrate," liable to the ſame luſts and paſſions as themſelves, to chooſe for them. For if they veſt a power in the magiſtrate to puniſh them, when they diſſent from his religion; " to bring them to act, even againſt their own inclina- " tion, according to their reaſon and ſound judgment;" which is, as you explain yourſelf in another place, to bring them to conſider reaſons and arguments proper and ſufficient to convince them: How far is this from leaving it to the choice of another man to preſcribe to them what faith or worſhip they ſhall embrace? Eſpecially if we conſider that you think it a ſtrange thing, that the author would have the care of every man's ſoul left to himſelf alone. So that this care being veſted " in the magiſtrate with a power to puniſh men to " make them conſider reaſons and arguments proper " and ſufficient to convince them" of the truth of his religion; the choice is evidently in the magiſtrate, as much as it can be in the power of one man to chooſe for another what religion he ſhall be of; which conſiſts only in a power of compelling him by puniſhments to embrace it.

I do neither you nor the magiſtrate injury, when I ſay that the power you give the magiſtrate of " puniſh- " ing men, to make them conſider reaſons and argu- " ments proper and ſufficient to convince them," is to convince them of the truth of his religion, and to bring them to it. For men will never, in his opinion, " act " according to reaſon and ſound judgment," which is the thing you here ſay men ſhould be brought to by the magiſtrate, even againſt their " own inclination;" till they embrace his religion. And if you have the brow of an honeſt man, you will not ſay the magiſtrate will ever puniſh you " to bring you to conſider any other " reaſons and arguments, but ſuch as are proper to " convince you" of the truth of his religion, and to bring you to that. Thus you ſhift forwards and back- wards. You ſay " the magiſtrate has no power to pu- " niſh men, to compel them to his religion" but only

to

to " compel them to conſider reaſons and arguments " proper to convince them" of the truth of his religion, which is all one as to ſay, no-body has power to chooſe your way for you to Jeruſalem; but yet the lord of the manor has power to puniſh you, " to bring " you to conſider reaſons and arguments proper and " ſufficient to convince you." Of what? That the way he goes in, is the right, and ſo to make you join in company, and go along with him. So that, in effect, what is all your going about, but to come at laſt to the ſame place again; and put a power into the magiſtrate's hands, under another pretence, to compel men to his religion; which uſe of force, the author has ſufficiently overthrown, and you yourſelf have quitted. But I am tired to follow you ſo often round the ſame circle.

You ſpeak of it here as the moſt deplorable condition imaginable, that " men ſhould be left to them- " ſelves, and not be forced to conſider and examine " the grounds of their religion, and ſearch impartially " and diligently after the truth." This you make the great miſcarriage of mankind. And for this you ſeem ſolicitous, all through your treatiſe, to find out a remedy; and there is ſcarce a leaf wherein you do not offer yours. But what if, after all now, you ſhould be found to prevaricate? " Men have contrived to them- " ſelves, ſay you, a great variety of religions:" it is granted. " They ſeek not the truth in this matter with " that application of mind, and that freedom of judg- " ment which is requiſite:" it is confeſſed. " All the " falſe religions now on foot in the world have taken " their riſe from the ſlight and partial conſideration, " which men have contented themſelves with, in " ſearching after the true; and men take them up, and " perſiſt in them for want of due examination:" be it ſo. " There is need of a remedy for this, and I " have found one whoſe ſucceſs cannot be queſtioned:" very well. What is it? Let us hear it. " Why, diſ- " ſenters muſt be puniſhed." Can any body that hears you ſay ſo, believe you in earneſt; and that want of examination is the thing you would have amended,

when want of examination is not the thing you would have puniſhed? If want of examination be the fault, want of examination muſt be puniſhed; if you are, as you pretend, fully ſatisfied, that puniſhment is the proper and only means to remedy it. But if, in all your treatiſe, you can ſhow me one place, where you ſay that the ignorant, the careleſs, the inconſiderate, the negligent in examining thoroughly the truth of their own and others religion, &c. are to be puniſhed; I will allow your remedy for a good one. But you have not ſaid any thing like this: and which is more, I tell you before-hand, you dare not ſay it. And whilſt you do not, the world has reaſon to judge, that however want of examination be a general fault, which you with great vehemency have exaggerated; yet you uſe it only for a pretence to puniſh diſſenters; and either diſtruſt your remedy, that it will not cure this evil, or elſe care not to have it generally cured. This evidently appears from your whole management of the argument. And he that reads your treatiſe with attention, will be more confirmed in this opinion, when he ſhall find, that you, who are ſo earneſt to have men puniſhed to bring them to conſider and examine, that ſo they may diſcover the way to ſalvation, have not ſaid one word of conſidering, ſearching, and hearkening to the ſcripture; which had been as good a rule for a chriſtian to have ſent them to, "as to reaſons and arguments proper to convince them" of you know not what; "as to the "inſtruction and government of the proper miniſters "of religion," which who they are, men are yet far from being agreed; "or as to the information of thoſe, "who tell them they have miſtaken their way, and "offer to ſhow them the right; and to the like uncertain and dangerous guides; which were not thoſe "that our Saviour and the apoſtles ſent men to, but "to the ſcriptures." "Search the ſcriptures, for in "them you think you have eternal life," ſays our Saviour to the unbelieving perſecuting Jews, (John v. 39.) and it is the ſcriptures which, St. Paul ſays, "are "able to make wiſe unto ſalvation," (2 Tim. iii. 15.)

Talk

Talk no more, therefore, if you have any care of your reputation, how much "it is every man's intereſt "not to be left to himſelf, without moleſtation, with- "out puniſhment in matters of religion. Talk not of "bringing men to embrace the truth that muſt ſave "them, by putting them upon examination." Talk no more "of force and puniſhment, as the only way "left to bring men to examine." It is evident you mean nothing leſs. For, though want of examination be the only fault you complain of, and puniſhment be in your opinion the only way to bring men to it; and this the whole deſign of your book; yet you have not once propoſed in it, that thoſe, who do not impartially examine, ſhould be forced to it. And that you may not think I talk at random, when I ſay you dare not; I will, if you pleaſe, give you ſome reaſons for my ſaying ſo.

1. Becauſe, if you propoſe that all ſhould be puniſhed, who are ignorant, who have not uſed "ſuch "conſideration as is apt and proper to manifeſt the "truth; but to have been determined in the choice of "their religion by impreſſions of education, admira- "tion of perſons, worldly reſpects, prejudices, and the "like incompetent motives; and have taken up their "religion, without examining it as they ought;" you will propoſe to have ſeveral of your own church, be it what it will, puniſhed; which would be a propoſition too apt to offend too many of it, for you to venture on. For whatever need there be of reformation, every one will not thank you for propoſing ſuch an one as muſt begin at, or at leaſt reach to, the houſe of God.

2. Becauſe, if you ſhould propoſe that all thoſe who are ignorant, careleſs, and negligent in examining, ſhould be puniſhed, you would have little to ſay in this queſtion of toleration. For if the laws of the ſtate were made, as they ought to be, equal to all the ſubjects, without diſtinction of men of different profeſſions in religion; and the faults to be amended by puniſhments, were impartially puniſhed, in all who are guilty of them; this would immediately produce a perfect toleration, or ſhow the uſeleſſneſs of force in matters of

religion. If therefore you think it ſo neceſſary, as you ſay, for the "promoting of true religion, and the ſal-"vation of ſouls, that men ſhould be puniſhed to make "them examine;" do but find a way to apply force to all that have not thoroughly and impartially examined, and you have my conſent. For though force be not the proper means of promoting religion; yet there is no better way to ſhow the uſeleſſneſs of it, than the applying it equally to miſcarriages, in whomſoever found; and not to diſtinct parties or perſuaſions of men, for the reformation of them alone, when others are equally faulty.

3. Becauſe, without being for as large a toleration as the author propoſes, you cannot be truly and ſincerely for a free and impartial examination. For whoever examines, muſt have the liberty to judge, and follow his judgment; or elſe you put him upon examination to no purpoſe. And whether that will not as well lead men from, as to your church, is ſo much a venture, that, by your way of writing, it is evident enough you are loth to hazard it; and if you are of the national church, it is plain your brethren will not bear with you in the allowance of ſuch a liberty. You muſt therefore either change your method; and if the want of examination be that great and dangerous fault you would have corrected, you muſt equally puniſh all that are equally guilty of any neglect in this matter, and then take your only means, your beloved force, and make the beſt of it; or elſe you muſt put off your maſk, and confeſs that you deſign not your puniſhments to bring men to examination, but to conformity. For the fallacy you have uſed, is too groſs to paſs upon this age.

What follows to p. 26. I think I have conſidered ſufficiently already. But there you have found out ſomething worth notice. In this page, out of abundant kindneſs, when the diſſenters have their heads, without any cauſe, broken, you provide them a plaiſter. For, ſay you, "if upon ſuch examination of the matter," (i. e. brought to it by the magiſtrate's puniſhment) "they chance to find, that the truth does not lie on the "magiſtrate's ſide; they have gained thus much how-"ever,

" ever, even by the magiſtrate's miſapplying his power, " that they know better than they did before, where " the truth does lie." Which is as true, as if you ſhould ſay, upon examination I find ſuch a one is out of the way to York; therefore I know better than I did before, that I am in the right. For neither of you may be in the right. This were true indeed, if there were but two ways in all; a right and a wrong. But where there be an hundred ways, and but one right; your knowing upon examination, that that which I take is wrong, makes you not know any thing better than before, that yours is the right. But if that be the beſt reaſon you have for it, it is ninety-eight to one ſtill againſt you, that you are in the wrong. Beſides, he that has been puniſhed, may have examined before, and then you are ſure he gains nothing. However you think you do well to encourage the magiſtrate in puniſhing, and comfort the man who has ſuffered unjuſtly, by ſhowing what he ſhall gain by it. Whereas, on the contrary, in a diſcourſe of this nature, where the bounds of right and wrong are inquired into, and ſhould be eſtabliſhed, the magiſtrate was to be ſhowed the bounds of his authority, and warned of the injury he did when he miſapplies his power, and puniſhed any man who deſerved it not; and not be ſoothed into injuſtice, by conſideration of gain that might thence accrue to the ſufferer. " Shall we do evil that good may come of it?" There are a ſort of people who are very wary of touching upon the magiſtrate's duty, and tender of ſhowing the bounds of his power, and the injuſtice and ill conſequences of his miſapplying it; at leaſt, ſo long as it is miſapplied in favour of them, and their party. I know not whether you are of their number. But this I am ſure, you have the misfortune here to fall into their miſtake. The magiſtrate, you confeſs, may in this caſe miſapply his power; and inſtead of repreſenting to him the injuſtice of it, and the account he muſt give to his ſovereign, one day, of this great truſt put into his hands, for the equal protection of all his ſubjects: you pretend advantages which the ſufferer may receive from it: and

ſo inſtead of diſheartening from, you give encouragement to, the miſchief. Which, upon your principle, joined to the natural thirſt in man after arbitrary power, may be carried to all manner of exorbitancy, with ſome pretence of right.

For thus ſtands your ſyſtem: "If force, i. e. puniſhment, may be any way uſeful for the promoting "the ſalvation of ſouls, there is a right ſome-where to "uſe it. And this right, ſay you, is in the magiſtrate." Who then, upon your grounds, may quickly find reaſon, where it ſuits his inclination, or ſerves his turn, to puniſh men directly to bring them to his religion. For if he may uſe force, becauſe it "may be, indirectly "and at a diſtance, any way uſeful towards the ſalvation of men's ſouls," towards the procuring any degree of glory; why may he not, by the ſame rule, uſe it where it may be uſeful, at leaſt indirectly and at a diſtance, towards the procuring a greater degree of glory? For St. Paul aſſures us, "that the afflictions of "this life work for us a far more exceeding weight of "glory." So that why ſhould they not be puniſhed, if in the wrong, to bring them into the right way; if in the right, to make them by their ſufferings "gainers "of a far more exceeding weight of glory?" But whatever you ſay "of puniſhment being lawful, becauſe, "indirectly and at a diſtance, it may be uſeful;" I ſuppoſe, upon cooler thoughts, you will be apt to ſuſpect that, however ſufferings may promote the ſalvation of thoſe who make a good uſe of them, and ſo ſet men ſurer in the right way, or higher in a ſtate of glory; yet thoſe who make men unduly ſuffer, will have the heavier account, and greater weight of guilt upon them, to ſink them deeper in the pit of perdition; and that therefore they ſhould be warned to take care of ſo uſing their power. Becauſe whoever be gainers by it, they themſelves will, without repentance and amendment, be ſure to be loſers. But by granting that the magiſtrate miſapplies his power, when he puniſhes thoſe who have the right on their ſide, whether it be to bring them to his own religion, or whether it be "to bring

"them

" them to conſider reaſons and arguments proper to " convince them," you grant all that the author contends for. All that he endeavours, is to ſhow the bounds of civil power; and that in puniſhing others for religion, the magiſtrate miſapplies the force he has in his hands, and ſo goes beyond right, beyond the limits of his power. For I do not think the author of the letter ſo vain, I am ſure for my part I am not, as to hope by arguments, though ever ſo clear, to reform preſently all the abuſes in this matter; eſpecially whilſt men of art, and religion, endeavour ſo induſtriouſly to palliate and diſguiſe, what truth, yet, ſometimes, unawares forces from them.

Do not think I make a wrong uſe of your ſaying, " the magiſtrate miſapplies his power," when I ſay you therein grant all that the author contends for. For if the magiſtrate miſapplies, or makes wrong uſe of his power, when he puniſhes in matters of religion any one who is in the right, though it be but to make him conſider, as you grant he does; he alſo miſapplies, or makes wrong uſe of his power, when he puniſhes any one, whomſoever in matters of religion, to make him conſider. For every one is here judge for himſelf, what is right; and in matters of faith, and religious worſhip, another cannot judge for him. So that to puniſh any one in matters of religion, though it be but to make him conſider, is by your own confeſſion beyond the magiſtrate's power. And that puniſhing in matters of religion is beyond the magiſtrate's power, is what the author contends for.

You tell us in the following words, " all the hurt " that comes to them by it, is only the ſuffering ſome " tolerable inconveniencies, for their following the " light of their own reaſon, and the dictates of their " own conſciences; which certainly is no ſuch miſchief " to mankind, as to make it more eligible, that there " ſhould be no ſuch power veſted in the magiſtrate, " but the care of every man's ſoul ſhould be left to " himſelf alone (as this author demands it ſhould be;) " that is, that every man ſhould be ſuffered, quietly,

" and without the leaſt moleſtation, either to take no " care at all of his ſoul, if he be ſo pleaſed; or, in " doing it, to follow his own groundleſs prejudices, or " unaccountable humour, or any crafty ſeducer, whom " he may think fit to take for his guide." Why ſhould not the care of every man's ſoul be left to himſelf, rather than the magiſtrate? Is the magiſtrate like to be more concerned for it? Is the magiſtrate like to take more care of it? Is the magiſtrate commonly more careful of his own, than other men are of theirs? Will you ſay the magiſtrate is leſs expoſed, in matters of religion, to prejudices, humours, and crafty ſeducers, than other men? If you cannot lay your hand upon your heart, and ſay all this, what then will be got by the change? And " why may not the care of every man's ſoul be " left to himſelf?" Eſpecially, if a man be in ſo much danger to miſs the truth, " who is ſuffered quietly, and " without the leaſt moleſtation, either to take no care " of his ſoul, if he be ſo pleaſed, or to follow his own " prejudices," &c. For if want of moleſtation be the dangerous ſtate, wherein men are likelieſt to miſs the right way; it muſt be confeſſed, that, of all men, the magiſtrate is moſt in danger to be in the wrong, and ſo the unfitteſt, if you take the care of men's ſouls from themſelves, of all men, to be intruſted with it. For he never meets with that great and only antidote of yours againſt errour, which you here call moleſtation. He never has the benefit of your ſovereign remedy, puniſhment, to make him conſider; which you think ſo neceſſary, that you look on it as a moſt dangerous ſtate for men to be without it; and therefore tell us, " it is " every man's true intereſt, not to be left wholly to " himſelf in matters of religion."

Thus, ſir, I have gone through your whole treatiſe, and, as I think, have omitted nothing in it material. If I have, I doubt not but I ſhall hear of it. And now I refer it to yourſelf, as well as to the judgment of the world, whether the author of the letter, in ſaying no-body hath a right, or you, in ſaying the magiſtrate hath a right, to uſe force in matters of religion, has

has moſt reaſon. In the mean time, I leave this requeſt with you: that if ever you write again, about "the "means of bringing ſouls to ſalvation," which certainly is the beſt deſign any one can employ his pen in, you would take care not to prejudice ſo good a cauſe, by ordering it ſo, as to make it look as if you writ for a party.

I am, SIR,

Your moſt humble ſervant,

May 27, 1690.

PHILANTHROPUS.

A THIRD

A THIRD

LETTER

FOR

TOLERATION.

* A THIRD

LETTER

FOR

TOLERATION.

To the AUTHOR of the Third LETTER concerning TOLERATION.

CHAPTER I.

SIR,

THE buſineſs which your Letter concerning Toleration found me engaged in, has taken up ſo much of the time my health would allow me ever ſince, that I doubt whether I ſhould now at all have troubled

* The reader may be pleaſed to take notice, that
L. I. Stands for the Letter concerning Toleration.
A. For the Argument of the Letter concerning Toleration briefly conſidered and anſwered.
L. II. The Second Letter concerning Toleration.
P. The pages of the Third Letter concerning Toleration.

you

you or the world with an anſwer, had not ſome of my friends, ſufficiently ſatisfied of the weakneſs of your arguments, with repeated inſtances, perſuaded me it might be of uſe to truth, in a point of ſo great moment, to clear it from thoſe fallacies which might perhaps puzzle ſome unwary readers; and therefore prevailed on me to ſhow the wrong grounds and miſtaken reaſonings you make uſe of to ſupport your new way of perſecution. Pardon me, ſir, that I uſe that name, which you are ſo much offended at: for if puniſhment be puniſhment, though it come ſhort of the diſcipline of fire and faggot, it is as certain that puniſhment for religion is truly perſecution, though it be only ſuch puniſhment as you in your clemency think fit to call "moderate "and convenient penalties." But however you pleaſe to call them, I doubt not but to let you ſee, that if you will be true to your own principles, and ſtand to what you have ſaid, you muſt carry your "ſome degrees of "force," as you phraſe it, to all thoſe degrees which in words you declare againſt.

You have indeed in this laſt letter of yours altered the queſtion; for, p. 26, you tell me the queſtion between us, is, "whether the magiſtrate hath any right "to uſe force to bring men to the true religion?" Whereas you yourſelf own the queſtion to be, "whether "the magiſtrate has a right to uſe force in matters of "religion?" Whether this alteration be at all to the advantage of truth, or your cauſe, we ſhall ſee. But hence you take occaſion all along to lay a load on me for charging you with the abſurdities of a power in the magiſtrates to puniſh men, to bring them to their religion; whereas you here tell us they have a right to uſe force "only to bring men to the true." But whether I were more to blame to ſuppoſe you to talk coherently and mean ſenſe, or you in expreſſing yourſelf ſo doubtfully and uncertainly, where you were concerned to be plain and direct, I ſhall leave to our readers to judge; only here in the beginning, I ſhall endeavour to clear myſelf of that imputation, I ſo often meet with, of charging on you conſequences you do not own, and arguing againſt an opinion that is not yours, in thoſe places,

places, where I ſhow how little advantage it would be to truth, or the ſalvation of men's ſouls, that all magiſtrates ſhould have a right to uſe force to bring men to embrace their religion. This I ſhall do by proving, that if upon your grounds the magiſtrate, as you pretend, be obliged to uſe force to bring men to the true religion, it will neceſſarily follow, that every magiſtrate, who believes his religion to be true, is obliged to uſe force to bring men to his.

You tell us, "that by the law of nature the magiſtrate is inveſted with coactive power, and obliged to uſe it for all the good purpoſes which it might ſerve, and for which it ſhould be found needful, even for the reſtraining of falſe and corrupt religion: and that it is the magiſtrate's duty, to which he is commiſſioned by the law of nature, but the ſcripture does not properly give it him."

I ſuppoſe you will grant me, that any thing laid upon the magiſtrate as a duty, is ſome way or other practicable. Now the magiſtrate being obliged to uſe force in matters of religion, but yet ſo as to bring men only to the true religion, he will not be in any capacity to perform this part of his duty, unleſs the religion he is thus to promote, be what he can certainly know, or elſe what it is ſufficient for him to believe, to be the true: either his knowledge or his opinion muſt point out that religion to him, which he is by force to promote; or elſe he may promiſcuouſly and indifferently promote any religion, and puniſh men at a venture, to bring them from that they are in, to any other. This laſt I think no-body has been ſo wild as to ſay.

If therefore it muſt be either his knowledge or his perſuaſion that muſt guide the magiſtrate herein, and keep him within the bounds of his duty; if the magiſtrates of the world cannot know, certainly know, the true religion to be the true religion, but it be of a nature to exerciſe their faith; (for where viſion, knowledge and certainty is, there faith is done away,) then that which gives them the laſt determination herein, muſt be their own belief, their own perſuaſion.

To

To you and me the christian religion is the true, and that is built, to mention no other articles of it, on this, that Jesus Christ was put to death at Jerusalem, and rose again from the dead. Now do you or I know this? I do not ask with what assurance we believe it, for that in the highest degree not being knowledge, is not what we now inquire after. Can any magistrate demonstrate to himself, and if he can to himself, he does ill not to do it to others, not only all the articles of his church, but the fundamental ones of the christian religion? For whatever is not capable of demonstration, as such remote matters of fact are not, is not, unless it be self-evident, capable to produce knowledge, how well grounded and great soever the assurance of faith may be wherewith it is received; but faith it is still, and not knowledge; persuasion, and not certainty. This is the highest the nature of the thing will permit us to go in matters of revealed religion, which are therefore called matters of faith: a persuasion of our own minds, short of knowledge, is the last result that determines us in such truths. It is all God requires in the gospel for men to be saved: and it would be strange if there were more required of the magistrate for the direction of another in the way to salvation, than is required of him for his own salvation. Knowledge then, properly so called, not being to be had of the truths necessary to salvation, the magistrate must be content with faith and persuasion for the rule of that truth he will recommend and enforce upon others; as well as of that whereon he will venture his own eternal condition. If therefore it be the magistrate's duty to use force to bring men to the true religion, it can be only to that religion which he believes to be true: so that if force be at all to be used by the magistrate in matters of religion, it can only be for the promoting that religion which he only believes to be true, or none at all. I grant that a strong assurance of any truth settled upon prevalent and well-grounded arguments of probability, is often called knowledge in popular ways of talking: but being here to distinguish between knowledge and belief, to what degrees of confidence

fidence ſoever raiſed, their boundaries muſt be kept, and their names not confounded. I know not what greater pledge a man can give of a full perſuaſion of the truth of any thing, than his venturing his ſoul upon it, as he does, who ſincerely embraces any religion, and receives it for true. But to what degree ſoever of aſſurance his faith may riſe, it ſtill comes ſhort of knowledge. Nor can any one now, I think, arrive to greater evidence of the truth of the chriſtian religion, than the firſt converts in the time of our Saviour and the apoſtles had; of whom yet nothing more was required but to believe.

But ſuppoſing all the truths of the chriſtian religion neceſſary to ſalvation could be ſo known to the magiſtrate, that, in his uſe of force for the bringing men to embrace theſe, he could be guided by infallible certainty; yet I fear this would not ſerve your turn, nor authorize the magiſtrate to uſe force to bring men in England, or any where elſe, into the communion of the national church, in which ceremonies of human inſtitution were impoſed, which could not be known, nor, being confeſſed things in their own nature indifferent, ſo much as thought neceſſary to ſalvation.

But of this I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak in another place; all the uſe I make of it here, is to ſhow, that the croſs in baptiſm, kneeling at the ſacrament, and ſuch-like things, being impoſſible to be known neceſſary to ſalvation, a certain knowledge of the truth of the articles of faith of any church could not authorize the magiſtrate to compel men to embrace the communion of that church, wherein any thing were made neceſſary to communion, which he did not know was neceſſary to ſalvation.

By what has been already ſaid, I ſuppoſe it is evident, that if the magiſtrate be to uſe force only for promoting the true religion, he can have no other guide but his own perſuaſion of what is the true religion, and muſt be led by that in his uſe of force, or elſe not uſe it at all in matters of religion. If you take the latter of theſe conſequences, you and I are agreed: if the for-

mer, you must allow all magistrates, of whatsoever religion, the use of force to bring men to theirs, and so be involved in all those ill consequences which you cannot it seems admit, and hoped to decline by your useless distinction of force to be used, not for any, but for the true religion.

"It is the duty, you say, of the magistrate to use "force for promoting the true religion." And in several places you tell us, he is obliged to it. Persuade magistrates in general of this, and then tell me how any magistrate shall be restrained from the use of force, for the promoting what he thinks to be the true? For he being persuaded that it is his duty to use force to promote the true religion, and being also persuaded his is the true religion, what shall stop his hand? Must he forbear the use of force till he be got beyond believing, into a certain knowledge that all he requires men to embrace, is necessary to salvation? If that be it you will stand to, you have my consent, and I think there will be no need of any other toleration. But if the believing his religion to be the true, be sufficient for the magistrate to use force for the promoting of it, will it be so only to the magistrates of the religion that you profess? And must all other magistrates sit still, and not do their duty till they have your permission? If it be your magistrate's duty to use force for the promoting the religion he believes to be the true, it will be every magistrate's duty to use force for the promoting what he believes to be the true, and he sins if he does not receive and promote it as if it were true. If you will not take this upon my word, yet I desire you to do it upon the strong reason of a very judicious and reverend prelate [Dr. John Sharp, archbishop of York,] of the present church of England. In a discourse concerning conscience, printed in quarto, 1687, p. 18, you will find these following words, and much more to this purpose: "Where a man is mistaken in his judgment, "even in that case it is always a sin to act against it. "Though we should take that for a duty which is re-"ally a sin, yet so long as we are thus persuaded, it

"will

" will be highly criminal in us to act in contradiction " to this perſuaſion: and the reaſon of this is evident, " becauſe by ſo doing we wilfully act againſt the beſt " light which at preſent we have for direction of our " actions. So that when all is done, the immediate " guide of our actions can be nothing but our conſci- " ence, our judgment and perſuaſion. If a man, for " inſtance, ſhould of a jew become a chriſtian, whilſt " yet in his heart he believed that the Meſſiah is not yet " come, and that our Lord Jeſus was an impoſtor: or " if a papiſt ſhould renounce the communion of the " roman church, and join with ours, whilſt yet he is " perſuaded that the roman church is the only catho- " lic church, and that our reformed churches are here- " tical or ſchiſmatical; though now there is none of " us that will deny that the men in both theſe caſes " have made a good change, as having changed a falſe " religion for a true one, yet for all that I dare ſay we " ſhould all agree they were both of them great villains " for making that change; becauſe they made it not " upon honeſt principles, and in purſuance of their " judgment, but in direct contradiction to both." So that it being the magiſtrate's duty to uſe force to bring men to the true religion, and he being perſuaded his is the true, I ſuppoſe you will no longer queſtion but that he is as much obliged to uſe force to bring men to it, as if it were the true; and then, Sir, I hope you have too much reſpect for magiſtrates, not to allow them to believe the religions to be true which they profeſs.— Theſe things put together, I deſire you to conſider whether if magiſtrates are obliged to uſe force to bring men to the true religion, every magiſtrate is not obliged to uſe force to bring men to that religion he believes to be true?

This being ſo, I hope I have not argued ſo wholly beſide the purpoſe, as you all through your letter accuſe me, for charging on your doctrine all the ill conſequences, all the prejudice it would be to the true religion, that magiſtrates ſhould have power to uſe force to bring men to their religions: and I preſume you will think yourſelf concerned to give to all theſe places in

the firſt and ſecond letter concerning toleration, which ſhow the inconveniencies and abſurdities of ſuch an uſe of force, ſome other anſwer, than that "you are for "puniſhing only ſuch as reject the true religion. That "it is plain the force you ſpeak of is not force, my way "applied, *i. e.* applied to the promoting the true re-"ligion only, but to the promoting all the national re-"ligions in the world." And again, to my arguing that force your way applied, if it can propagate any religion, it is likelier to be the falſe than the true, becauſe few of the magiſtrates of the world are in the right way; you reply, "this would have been to the purpoſe, if "you" had aſſerted that every magiſtrate may uſe force "your" indirect way (or any way) to bring men to his "own religion, whatever that be. But if "you" aſ-"ſerted no ſuch thing, (as no man you think but an "atheiſt will aſſert it) then this is quite beſide the bu-"ſineſs." This is the great ſtrength of your anſwer, and your refuge almoſt in every page. So that I will preſume it reaſonable to expect that you ſhould clearly and directly anſwer what I have here ſaid, or elſe find ſome other anſwer than what you have done to the ſecond letter concerning toleration; however acute you are, in your way, in ſeveral places, on this occaſion, as p. 11, 12, for my anſwer to which I ſhall refer you to another place.

To my argument againſt force, from the magiſtrate's being as liable to errour as the reſt of mankind, you anſwer, That I "might have conſidered that this argu-"ment concerns none but thoſe who aſſert that every "magiſtrate has a right to uſe force to promote his own "religion, whatever it be, which "you" think no "man that has any religion will aſſert." I ſuppoſe you may think now this anſwer will ſcarce ſerve, and you muſt aſſert either no magiſtrate to have right to promote his religion by force, or elſe be involved in the condemnation you paſs on thoſe who aſſert it of all magiſtrates. And here I think, as to the deciſion of the queſtion betwixt us, I might leave this matter: but there being in your letter a great many other groſs miſtakes, wrong ſuppoſitions, and fallacious arguings, which

which in thoſe general and plauſible terms you have made uſe of in ſeveral places, as beſt ſerved your turn, may poſſibly have impoſed on yourſelf, as well as they are fitted to do ſo on others, and therefore will deſerve to have ſome notice taken of them; I ſhall give myſelf the trouble of examining your letter a little farther.

To my ſaying, " It is not for the magiſtrate, upon " an imagination of its uſefulneſs, to make uſe of any " other means than what the author and finiſher of our " faith had directed;" you reply, " which how true " ſoever, is not, I think, very much to the purpoſe; " for if the magiſtrate does only aſſiſt that miniſtry " which our Lord has appointed, by uſing ſo much of " his coactive power for the furthering their ſervice, as " common experience diſcovers to be uſeful and ne- " ceſſary for that end; there is no manner of ground " to ſay, that, upon an imagination of its uſefulneſs, " he makes uſe of any other means for the ſalvation of " men's ſouls, than what the author and finiſher of our " faith has directed. It is true indeed the author and " finiſher of our faith has given the magiſtrate no new " power or commiſſion, nor was there any need that he " ſhould, (if himſelf had had any temporal power to " give:) for he found him already, even by the law of " nature, the miniſter of God to the people for good, " and bearing the ſword not in vain, *i. e.* inveſted with " coactive power, and obliged to uſe it for all the good " purpoſes which it might ſerve, and for which it " ſhould be found needful; even for the reſtraining of " falſe and corrupt religion; as Job long before (per- " haps before any part of the ſcriptures were written) " acknowledged, when he ſaid, that the worſhipping " the ſun or the moon was an iniquity to be puniſhed " by the judge. But though our Saviour has given the " magiſtrates no new power, yet being king of kings, " he expects and requires that they ſhould ſubmit them- " ſelves to his ſceptre, and uſe the power which always " belonged to them, for his ſervice, and for the ad- " vancing his ſpiritual kingdom in the world. And " even that charity which our great Maſter ſo earneſtly

" recommends, and so strictly requires of all his dis-
" ciples, as it obliges all men to seek and promote the
" good of others, as well as their own, especially their
" spiritual and eternal good, by such means as their se-
" veral places and relations enable them to use; so does
" it especially oblige the magistrate to do it as a magi-
" strate, *i. e.* by that power which enables him to do
" it above the rate of other men.

" So far therefore is the christian magistrate, when he
" gives his helping hand to the furtherance of the gos-
" pel, by laying convenient penalties upon such as re-
" ject it, or any part of it, from using any other means
" for the salvation of men's souls, than what the au-
" thor and finisher of our faith has directed, that he
" does no more than his duty to God, to his Redeemer,
" and to his subjects, requires of him."

The sum of your reply amounts to this, that by the law of nature the magistrate may make use of his co-active power where it is useful and necessary for the good of the people. If it be from the law of nature, it must be to all magistrates equally: and then I ask, whether this good they are to promote without any new power or commission from our Saviour, be what they think to be so, or what they certainly know to be so. If it be what they think to be so, then all magistrates may use force to bring men to their religion: and what good this is like to be to men, or of what use to the true religion, we have elsewhere considered. If it be only that good which they certainly know to be so, they will be very ill enabled to do what you require of them, which you here tell us is to assist that ministry which our Lord has appointed. Which of the magistrates of your time did you know to have so well studied the controversies about ordination and church-government, to be so well versed in church-history and succession, that you can undertake that he certainly knew which was the ministry which our Lord had appointed, either that of Rome, or that of Sweden; whether the episcopacy in one part of this island, or the presbytery in another, were the ministry which our Lord had appointed? If you say, being firmly persuaded of it be sufficient to authorize the

the magiſtrate to uſe force; you, with the atheiſts, as you call them, who do ſo, give the people up in every country to the coactive force of the magiſtrate to be employed for the aſſiſting the miniſters of his religion: and king Lewis of good right comes in with his dragoons; for it is not much doubted that he as ſtrongly believed his popiſh prieſts and jeſuits to be the miniſtry which our Lord appointed, as either king Charles or king James the ſecond believed that of the church of England to be ſo. And of what uſe ſuch an exerciſe of the coactive power of all magiſtrates is to the people, or to the true religion, you are concerned to ſhow. But it is, you know, but to tell me, I only trifle, and this is all anſwered.

What in other places you tell us, is to make men "hear, conſider, ſtudy, embrace, and bring men to the "true religion," you here do very well to tell us is to aſſiſt the miniſtry: and to that, it is true, "common "experience diſcovers the magiſtrate's coactive force "to be uſeful and neceſſary, *viz.* to thoſe who taking the reward, but not over-buſying themſelves in the care of ſouls, find it for their eaſe, that the magiſtrate's coactive power ſhould ſupply their want of paſtoral care, and be made uſe of to bring thoſe into an outward conformity to the national church, whom either for want of ability they cannot, or want of due and friendly application, joined with an exemplary life, they never ſo much as endeavoured to prevail on heartily to embrace it. That there may be ſuch neglects in the beſt-conſtituted national church in the world, the complaints of a very knowing biſhop of our church, [Dr. Gilbert Burnet, biſhop of Saliſbury,] in a late diſcourſe of the PASTORAL CARE, is too plain an evidence.

Without ſo great an authority I ſhould ſcarce have ventured, though it lay juſt in my way, to have taken notice of what is ſo viſible, that it is in every one's mouth; for fear you ſhould have told me again, "I "made myſelf an occaſion to ſhow my good-will to-"ward the clergy;" for you will not, I ſuppoſe, ſuſpect that eminent prelate to have any ill-will to them.

If this were not ſo, that ſome were negligent, I imagine the preachers of the true religion, which lies, as you tell us, ſo obvious and expoſed, as to be eaſily diſtinguiſhed from the falſe, would need or deſire no other aſſiſtance from the magiſtrate's coactive power, but what ſhould be directed againſt the irregularity of men's lives; their luſts being that alone, as you tell us, that makes force neceſſary to aſſiſt the true religion; which, were it not for our depraved nature, would by its light and reaſonableneſs have the advantage againſt all falſe religions.

You tell us too, that the magiſtrate may impoſe creeds and ceremonies; indeed you ſay ſound creeds, and decent ceremonies, but that helps not your cauſe; for who muſt be judge of that ſound, and that decent? If the impoſer, then thoſe words ſignify nothing at all, but that the magiſtrate may impoſe thoſe creeds and ceremonies which he thinks ſound and decent, which is in effect ſuch as he thinks fit. Indeed you telling us a little above, in the ſame page, that it is "a vice not to "worſhip God in ways preſcribed by thoſe to whom "God has left the ordering of ſuch matters;" you ſeem to make other judges of what is ſound and decent, and the magiſtrate but the executor of their decrees, with the aſſiſtance of his coactive power. A pretty foundation to eſtabliſh creeds and ceremonies on, that God has left the ordering of them to thoſe who cannot order them! But ſtill the ſame difficulty returns; for, after they have preſcribed, muſt the magiſtrate judge them to be ſound and decent, or muſt he impoſe them, though he judge them not ſound or decent? If he muſt judge them ſo himſelf, we are but where we were: if he muſt impoſe them when preſcribed, though he judge them not ſound nor decent, it is a pretty ſort of drudgery is put on the magiſtrate. And how far is this ſhort of implicit faith? But if he muſt not judge what is ſound and decent, he muſt judge at leaſt who are thoſe to whom God has left the ordering of ſuch matters; and then the king of France is ready again with his dragoons for the ſound doctrine and decent ceremonies of his preſcribers in the council of Trent; and that upon this

this ground, with as good right as any other has for the preſcriptions of any others. Do not miſtake me again, Sir; I do not ſay, he judges as right; but I do ſay, that whilſt he judges the council of Trent, or the clergy of Rome to be thoſe to whom God has left the ordering of thoſe matters, he has as much right to follow their decrees, as any other to follow the judgment of any other ſet of mortal men whom he believes to be be ſo.

But whoever is to be judge of what is ſound or decent in the caſe, I aſk,

Of what uſe and neceſſity is it to impoſe creeds and ceremonies? For that uſe and neceſſity is all the commiſſion you can find the magiſtrate hath to uſe his coactive power to impoſe them.

1. Of what uſe and neceſſity is it among chriſtians that own the ſcripture to be the word of God and rule of faith to make and impoſe a creed? What commiſſion for this hath the magiſtrate from the law of nature? God hath given a revelation that contains in it all things neceſſary to ſalvation, and of this his people are all perſuaded. What neceſſity now is there? How does their good require it, that the magiſtrate ſhould ſingle out, as he thinks fit, any number of thoſe truths as more neceſſary to ſalvation than the reſt, if God himſelf has not done it?

2. But next, are theſe creeds in the words of the ſcripture, or not? If they are, they are certainly ſound, as containing nothing but truth in them: and ſo they were before, as they lay in the ſcripture. But thus though they contain nothing but ſound truths, yet they may be imperfect, and ſo unſound rules of faith, ſince they may require more or leſs than God requires to be believed as neceſſary to ſalvation. For what greater neceſſity, I pray, is there that a man ſhould believe that Chriſt ſuffered under Pontius Pilate, than that he was born at Bethlehem of Judah? Both are certainly true, and no chriſtian doubts of either: but how comes one to be made an article of faith, and impoſed by the magiſtrate as neceſſary to ſalvation, (for otherwiſe there can

can be no neceſſity of impoſition) and the other not?

Do not miſtake me here, as if I would lay by that ſummary of the chriſtian religion, which is contained in that which is called the apoſtles creed; which though nobody, who examines the matter, will have reaſon to conclude of the apoſtles compiling, yet is certainly of reverend antiquity, and ought ſtill to be preſerved in the church. I mention it not to argue againſt it, but againſt your impoſition; and to ſhow that even that creed, though of that antiquity, though it contain in it all the credenda neceſſary to ſalvation, cannot yet upon your principles be impoſed by the coercive power of the magiſtrate, who, even by the commiſſion you have found out for him, can uſe his force for nothing but what is abſolutely neceſſary to ſalvation.

But if the creed to be impoſed be not in the words of divine revelation; then it is in plainer, more clear and intelligible expreſſions, or not: If no plainer, what neceſſity of changing thoſe, which men inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt made uſe of? If you ſay, they are plainer; then they explain and determine the ſenſe of ſome obſcure and dubious places of ſcripture; which explication not being of divine revelation, though ſound to one man, may be unſound to another, and cannot be impoſed as truths neceſſary to ſalvation. Beſides that, this deſtroys what you tell us of the obviouſneſs of all truths neceſſary to ſalvation.

And as to rites and ceremonies, are there any neceſſary to ſalvation, which Chriſt has not inſtituted? If not, how can the magiſtrate impoſe them? What commiſſion has he, from the care he ought to have for the ſalvation of men's ſouls, to uſe his coactive force for the eſtabliſhment of any new ones which our Lord and Saviour, with due reverence be it ſpoken, had forgotten? He inſtituted two rites in his church; can any one add any new one to them? Chriſt commanded ſimply to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt; but the ſigning the croſs, how came that neceſſary? "Human authority, which is neceſſary to

" aſſiſt the truth againſt the corruption of nature," has made it ſo. But it is a " decent" ceremony. I aſk, is it ſo decent that the adminiſtration of baptiſm, ſimply, as our Saviour inſtituted, would be indecent without it? If not, then there is no reaſon to impoſe it for decency's ſake; for there can be no reaſon to alter or add any thing to the inſtitution of Chriſt, or introduce any ceremony or circumſtance into religion for decency, where the action would be decent without it. The command to " do all things decently, and in order," gave no authority to add to Chriſt's inſtitution any new ceremony; it only preſcribed the manner how, what was neceſſary to be done in the congregation, ſhould be there done, *viz.* after ſuch a manner, that if it were omitted, there would appear ſome indecency, whereof the congregation or collective body was to be judge, for to them that rule was given: And if that rule go beyond what I have ſaid, and gives power to men to introduce into religious worſhip whatever they ſhall think decent, and impoſe the uſe of it; I do not ſee how the greateſt part of the infinite ceremonies of the church of Rome could be complained of, or refuſed, if introduced into another church, and there impoſed by the magiſtrate. But if ſuch a power were given to the magiſtrate, that whatever he thought a decent ceremony he might de novo impoſe, he would need ſome expreſs commiſſion from God in ſcripture, ſince the commiſſion you ſay he has from the law of nature, will never give him a power to inſtitute new ceremonies in the chriſtian religion, which, be they decent, or what they will, can never be neceſſary to ſalvation.

The goſpel was to be preached in their aſſemblies; the rule then was, that the habit, geſture, voice, language, &c. of the preacher, for theſe were neceſſary circumſtances of the action, ſhould have nothing ridiculous or indecent in it. The praiſes of God were to be ſung; it muſt be then in ſuch poſtures and tunes as became the ſolemnity of that action. And ſo a convert was to be baptized; Chriſt inſtituted the eſſential part of that action, which was waſhing with water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt: in which care

care was alſo to be had, that in the doing this nothing ſhould be omitted that preſerved a decency in all the circumſtances of the action. But no-body will ſay, that, if the croſs were omitted, upon that account there would be any thing indecent in baptiſm.

What is to be done in the aſſemblies of chriſtians for the ſalvation of ſouls, is ſufficiently preſcribed in ſcripture: but ſince the circumſtances of the actions were ſo various, and might in ſeveral countries and ages have different appearances, as that appears decent in one country which is quite contrary in another; concerning them there could be no other rule given than what is, viz. "decently, in order, and to edification;" and in avoiding indecencies, and not adding any new ceremonies, how decent ſoever, this rule conſiſts.

I judge no man in the uſe of the croſs in baptiſm. The impoſition of that, or any other ceremony not inſtituted by Chriſt himſelf, is what I argue againſt, and ſay, is more than you upon your principles can make good.

Common ſenſe has ſatisfied all mankind, that it is above their reach to determine what things, in their own nature indifferent, were fit to be made uſe of in religion, and would be acceptable to the ſuperiour beings in their worſhip, and therefore they have every-where thought it neceſſary to derive that knowledge from the immediate will and dictates of the gods themſelves, and have taught that their forms of religion and outward modes of worſhip were founded upon revelation: no-body daring to do ſo abſurd and inſolent a thing, as to take upon him to preſume with himſelf, or to preſcribe to others by his own authority, which ſhould in theſe indifferent and mean things be worthy of the Deity, and make an acceptable part of his worſhip. Indeed they all agreed in the duties of natural religion, and we find them by common conſent owning that piety and virtue, clean hands, and a pure heart not polluted with the breaches of the law of nature, was the beſt worſhip of the gods. Reaſon diſcovered to them that a good life was the moſt acceptable thing to the Deity; this the common light of nature put paſt doubt. But for

their

their ceremonies and outward performances, for them they appeal always to a rule received from the immediate direction of the ſuperiour powers themſelves, where they made uſe of, and had need of revelation. A plain confeſſion of mankind that in theſe things we have neither knowledge to diſcern, nor authority to preſcribe: that men cannot by their own ſkill find out what is fit, or by their own power make any thing worthy to be a part of religious worſhip. It is not for them to invent or impoſe ceremonies that ſhall recommend men to the Deity. It was ſo obvious and viſible, that it became men to have leave from God himſelf, before they dared to offer to the divine majeſty any of theſe trifling, mean, and to him uſeleſs things, as a grateful and valuable part of his worſhip; that no-body any where, amongſt the various and ſtrange religions they led men into, bid ſuch open defiance to common ſenſe, and the reaſon of all mankind, as to preſume to do it without vouching the appointment of God himſelf. Plato, who of all the heathens ſeems to have had the moſt ſerious thoughts about religion, ſays that the magiſtrate, or whoever has any ſenſe, will never introduce of his own head any new rites into his religion: for which he gives this convincing reaſon; "for, ſays he, he muſt know it is im-"poſſible for human nature to know any thing cer-"tainly concerning theſe matters." Epinom. poſt medium. It cannot therefore but be matter of aſtoniſhment, that any who call themſelves chriſtians, who have ſo ſure, and ſo full a revelation, which declares all the counſel of God concerning the way of attaining eternal ſalvation; ſhould dare by their own authority to add any thing to what is therein preſcribed, and impoſe it on others as a neceſſary part of religious worſhip, without the obſervance of which human inventions, men ſhall not be permitted the public worſhip of God. If thoſe rites and ceremonies preſcribed to the jews by God himſelf, and delivered at the ſame time and by the ſame hand to the jews that the moral law was; were called beggarly elements under the goſpel, and laid by as uſeleſs and burthenſome; what ſhall we call thoſe rites which have no other foundation, but the will and authority

authority of men, and of men very often, who have not much thought of the purity of religion, and practiſed it leſs?

Becauſe you think your argument for the magiſtrate's right to uſe force has not had its due conſideration, I ſhall here ſet it down in your own words, as it ſtands, and endeavour to give you ſatisfaction to it. You ſay there, "If ſuch a degree of outward force as has been "mentioned, be of great and even neceſſary uſe, for "the advancing thoſe ends, (as taking the world as we "find it, I think it appears to be) then it muſt be ac-"knowledged that there is a right ſomewhere to uſe it "for the advancing thoſe ends, unleſs we will ſay "(what without impiety cannot be ſaid) that the wiſe "and benign diſpoſer and governor of all things has "not furniſhed mankind with competent means for the "promoting his own honour in the world, and the "good of ſouls. And if there be ſuch a right ſome-"where, where ſhould it be, but where the power of "compelling reſides? That is principally, and in re-"ference to the public, in the civil ſovereign." Which words, if they have any argument in them, it in ſhort ſtands thus: Force is uſeful and neceſſary: The good and wiſe God, who without impiety cannot be ſuppoſed not to have furniſhed men with competent means for their ſalvation, has therefore given a right to ſome men to uſe it, and thoſe men are the civil ſovereigns.

To make this argument of any uſe to your purpoſe, you muſt ſpeak a little more diſtinctly, for here you, according to your laudable and ſafe way of writing, are wrapped up in the uncertainty of general terms, and muſt tell us, beſides the end for which it is uſeful and neceſſary, to whom it is uſeful and neceſſary. Is it uſeful and neceſſary to all men? That you will not ſay, for many are brought to embrace the true religion by bare preaching, without any force. Is it then neceſſary to all thoſe, and thoſe only, who, as you tell us, "re-"ject the true religion tendered with ſufficient evidence, "or at leaſt ſo far manifeſted to them, as to oblige them "to receive it, and to leave them without excuſe if "they do not?" To all therefore, who rejecting the true

true religion ſo tendered, are without excuſe, your moderate force is uſeful and neceſſary. But is it to all thoſe competent, i. e. ſufficient means? That, it is evident in matter of fact, it is not; for, after all, many ſtand out. It is like you will ſay, which is all you have to ſay, that thoſe are ſuch, to whom, having reſiſted this laſt means, moderate force, God always refuſeth his grace to, without which no means is efficacious. So that your competent, at laſt, are only ſuch means as are the utmoſt that God has appointed, and will have uſed, and which when men reſiſt, they are without excuſe, and ſhall never after have the aſſiſtance of his grace to bring them to that truth they have reſiſted, and ſo be as the apoſtle, 2 Tim. iii. 8. calls ſuch, "men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the "faith." If then it ſhall be, that the day of grace ſhall be over to all thoſe who reject the truth manifeſted to them, with ſuch evidence, as leaves them without excuſe, and that bare preaching and exhortation ſhall be according to the good pleaſure of the benign diſpoſer of all things enough, when neglected, "to make their "hearts fat, their ears heavy, and ſhut their eyes that "they ſhould not perceive nor underſtand, nor be con-"verted that God ſhould heal them;" I ſay, if this ſhould be the caſe, then your force, whatever you imagine of it, will neither be competent, uſeful, nor neceſſary. So that it will reſt upon you to prove that your moderate degrees of force are thoſe means of grace which God will have, as neceſſary to ſalvation, tried upon every one before he will paſs that ſentence in Iſaiah, "Make his heart fat, &c." and that your degree of moderate force is that beyond which God will have no other or more powerful means uſed, but that thoſe whom that works not upon, ſhall be left reprobate concerning the faith. And till you have proved this, you will in vain pretend your moderate force, whatever you might think of it, if you had the ordering of that matter in the place of God, to be uſeful, neceſſary, and competent means. For if preaching, exhortation, inſtruction, &c. as ſeems by the whole current of the ſcripture (and it appears not that Iſaiah in the place above-

above-cited made their hearts fat with any thing but his words) be that means, which when rejected to such a degree, as he sees fit, God will punish with a reprobate mind, and that there be no other means of grace to come after; you must confess, that whatever good opinion you have of your moderate force after this sentence is passed, it can do no good, have no efficacy, neither directly nor indirectly and at a distance, towards the bringing men to the truth.

If your moderate force be not that precise utmost means of grace, which when ineffectual, God will not afford his grace to any other, then your moderate force is not the competent means you talk of. This therefore you must prove, that preaching alone is not, but that your moderate force joined to it, is that means of grace, which when neglected or resisted, God will assist no other means with his grace to bring men into the obedience of the truth; and this, let me tell you, you must prove by revelation. For it is impossible to know, but by revelation, the just measures of God's long-suffering, and what those means are, which when men's corruptions have rendered ineffectual, his spirit shall no longer strive with them, nor his grace assist any other means for their conversion or salvation. When you have done this, there will be some ground for you to talk of your moderate force, as the means which God's wisdom and goodness are engaged to furnish men with; but to speak of it, as you do now, as if it were that both necessary and competent means, that it would be an imputation to the wisdom and goodness of God, if men were not furnished with it, when it is evident, that the greatest part of mankind have always been destitute of it; will I fear be not easily cleared from that impiety you mention; for though the magistrate had the right to use it, yet wherever that moderate force was not made use of, there men were not furnished with your competent means of salvation.

It is necessary for the vindication of God's justice and goodness, that those who miscarry should do so by their own fault, that their destruction should be from themselves, and they be left inexcusable: But pray how will

will you ſhow us, that it is neceſſary, that any who have reſiſted the truth tendered to them only by preaching, ſhould be ſaved, any more than it is neceſſary that thoſe who have reſiſted the truth when moderate force has been joined to the ſame preaching, ſhould be ſaved? They are inexcuſable one as well as the other, and thereby have incurred the wrath of God, under which he may juſtly leave the one as well as the other; and therefore he cannot be ſaid not to have been furniſhed with competent means of ſalvation, who having rejected the truth preached to him, has never any penalties laid on him by the magiſtrate to make him conſider the truths he before rejected.

All the ſtreſs of your hypotheſis for the neceſſity of force, lies on this, That the majority of mankind are not prevailed on by preaching, and therefore the goodneſs and wiſdom of God are obliged to furniſh them ſome more effectual means, as you think. But who told you that the majority of mankind ſhould ever be brought into the ſtrait way and narrow gate? Or that force in your moderate degree was the neceſſary and competent, i. e. the juſt fit means to do it, neither over nor under, but that that only, and nothing but that could do it? If to vindicate his wiſdom and goodneſs God muſt furniſh mankind with other means, as long as the majority, yet unwrought upon, ſhall give any forward demander occaſion to aſk, "What other "means is there left?" He muſt alſo, after your moderate penalties have left the greater part of mankind unprevailed on, be bound to furniſh mankind with higher degrees of force upon this man's demand: and thoſe degrees of force proving ineffectual to the majority to make them truly and ſincerely chriſtians; God muſt be bound to furniſh the world again with a new ſupply of miracles upon the demand of another wiſe controller, who having ſet his heart upon miracles, as you have your's on force, will demand, what other means is there left but miracles? For it is like this laſt gentleman would take it very much amiſs of you, if you ſhould not allow this to be a good and unqueſtionable way of arguing; or if you ſhould deny that, after the

utmoſt force had been uſed, miracles might not do ſome ſervice at leaſt, indirectly and at a diſtance, towards the bringing men to embrace the truth. And if you cannot prove that miracles may not thus do ſome ſervice, he will conclude juſt as you do, that the cauſe is his.

Let us try your method a little farther. Suppoſe that when neither the gentleſt admonitions, nor the moſt earneſt intreaties will prevail, ſomething elſe is to be done as the only means left. What is it muſt be done? What is this neceſſary competent means that you tell us of? "It is to lay briars and thorns in their way." This therefore being ſuppoſed neceſſary, you ſay, "there "muſt ſomewhere be a right to uſe it." Let it be ſo. Suppoſe I tell you that right is in God, who certainly has a power to lay briars and thorns in the way of thoſe who are got into a wrong one, whenever he has graciouſly pleaſed that other means beſides inſtructions and admonitions ſhould be uſed to reduce them. And we may as well expect that thoſe thorns and briars laid in their way by God's providence, without telling them for what end, ſhould work upon them as effectually, though indirectly and at a diſtance, as thoſe laid in their way by the magiſtrate, without telling them for what end. God alone knows where it is neceſſary, and on whom it will be uſeful, which no man being capable of knowing, no man, though he has coercive power in his hand, can be ſuppoſed to be authorized to uſe it by the commiſſion he has to do good, on whomſoever you ſhall judge it to be of great and even neceſſary uſe: no more than your judging it to be of great and even neceſſary uſe would authorize any one, who had got one of the inciſion-knives of the hoſpital in his hand, to cut thoſe for the ſtone with it, whom he could not know needed cutting, or that cutting would do them any good, when the maſter of the hoſpital had given him no expreſs order to uſe his inciſion-knife in that operation; nor was it known to any but the maſter, who needed, and on whom it would be uſeful; nor would he fail to uſe it himſelf wherever he found it neceſſary.

Be

Be force of as great and neceſſary uſe as you pleaſe; let it be ſo the competent means for the promoting the honour of God in the world, and the good of ſouls, that the right to uſe it muſt neceſſarily be ſomewhere. This right cannot poſſibly be, where you would have it, in the civil ſovereigns, and that for the very reaſon you give, viz. becauſe it muſt be where the power of compelling reſides. For ſince civil ſovereigns cannot compel themſelves, nor can the compelling power of one civil ſovereign reach another civil ſovereign; it will not in the hands of the civil ſovereigns reach the moſt conſiderable part of mankind, and thoſe who, both for their own and their ſubjects good, have moſt need of it. Beſides, if it go along with the power of compelling, it muſt be in the hands of all civil ſovereigns alike: which, by this, as well as ſeveral other reaſons I have given, being unavoidable to be ſo, this right will be ſo far from uſeful, that whatever efficacy force has, it will be employed to the doing more harm than good; ſince the greateſt part of civil ſovereigns being of falſe religions, force will be employed for the promoting of thoſe.

But let us grant what you can never prove, that though all civil ſovereigns have compelling power, yet only thoſe of the true religion have a right to uſe force in matters of religion: your own argument of mankind being unfurniſhed, which is impiety to ſay, with competent means for the promoting the honour of God, and the good of ſouls, ſtill preſſes you. For the compelling power of each civil ſovereign not reaching beyond his own dominions, the right of uſing force in the hands only of the orthodox civil ſovereigns, leaves the reſt, which is the far greater part of the world, deſtitute of this your neceſſary and competent means for promoting the honour of God in the world, and the good of ſouls.

Sir, I return you my thanks for having given me this occaſion to take a review of your argument, which you told me I had miſtaken; which I hope I now have not, and have anſwered to your ſatisfaction.

I confeſs I miſtook when I ſaid that cutting, being judged uſeful, could not authorize even a ſkilful ſurgeon to cut a man without any farther commiſſion: for it ſhould have been thus: that though a man has the inſtruments in his hand, and force enough to cut with, and cutting be judged by you of great and even neceſſary uſe in the ſtone; yet this, without any farther commiſſion, will not authorize any one to uſe his ſtrength and knife in cutting, who knows not who has the ſtone, nor has any light or meaſures to judge to whom cutting may be neceſſary or uſeful.

But let us ſee what you ſay in anſwer to my inſtance: 1. "That the ſtone does not always kill, though it be "not cured; but men do often live to a great age with "it, and die at laſt of other diſtempers. But averſion "to the true religion is certainly and inevitably mortal "to the ſoul, if not cured, and ſo of abſolute neceſſity "to be cured." Is it of abſolute neceſſity to be cured in all? If ſo, will you not here again think it requiſite that the wiſe and benign diſpoſer and governor of all things ſhould furniſh competent means for what is of abſolute neceſſity? For will it not be impiety to ſay, that God has ſo left mankind unfurniſhed of competent, i. e. ſufficient means for what is abſolutely neceſſary? For it is plain in your account men have not been furniſhed with ſufficient means for what is of abſolute neceſſity to be cured in all, if in any of them it be left uncured. For as you allow none to be ſufficient evidence, but what certainly gains aſſent; ſo by the ſame rule you cannot call that ſufficient means, which does not work the cure. It is in vain to ſay, the means were ſufficient, had it not been for their own fault, when that fault of theirs is the very thing to be cured. You go on: "and yet if we ſhould ſuppoſe the ſtone as cer-"tainly deſtructive of this temporal life, as that aver-"ſion is of men's eternal ſalvation: even ſo the neceſ-"ſity of curing it would be as much leſs than the ne-"ceſſity of curing that averſion, as this temporal life "falls ſhort in value of that which is eternal." This is built upon a ſuppoſition, that the neceſſity of the means

means is increaſed by the value of the end, which being in this caſe the ſalvation of men's ſouls, that is of infinite concernment to them, you conclude ſalvation abſolutely neceſſary: which makes you ſay that averſion, &c. being inevitably mortal to the ſoul, is of abſolute neceſſity to be cured. Nothing is of abſolute neceſſity but God: whatſoever elſe can be ſaid to be of neceſſity, is ſo only relatively in reſpect to ſomething elſe; and therefore nothing can indefinitely thus be ſaid to be of abſolute neceſſity, where the thing it relates to is not abſolutely neceſſary. We may ſay, wiſdom and power in God are abſolutely neceſſary, becauſe God himſelf is abſolutely neceſſary: but we cannot crudely ſay, the curing in men their averſion to the true religion, is abſolutely neceſſary, becauſe it is not abſolutely neceſſary that men ſhould be ſaved. But this is very proper and true to be ſaid, that curing this averſion is abſolutely neceſſary in all that ſhall be ſaved. But I fear that would not ſerve your turn, though it be certain, that your abſolute neceſſity in this caſe reaches no farther than this, that to be cured of this averſion is abſolutely neceſſary to ſalvation, and ſalvation is abſolutely neceſſary to happineſs; but neither of them, nor the happineſs itſelf of any man, can be ſaid to be abſolutely neceſſary.

This miſtake makes you ſay, that ſuppoſing "the "ſtone certainly deſtructive of this temporal life, yet "the neceſſity of curing it would be as much leſs than "the neceſſity of curing that averſion, as this temporal "life falls ſhort in value of that which is eternal." Which is quite otherwiſe: for if the ſtone will certainly kill a man without cutting, it is as abſolutely neceſſary to cut a man for the ſtone for the ſaving of his life, as it is to cure the averſion for the ſaving of his ſoul. Nay, if you have but eggs to fry, fire is as abſolutely neceſſary as either of the other, though the value of the end be in theſe caſes infinitely different; for in one of them you loſe only your dinner, in the other your life, and in the other your ſoul. But yet, in theſe caſes, fire, cutting, and curing that averſion, are each of them

abſolutely and equally neceſſary to their reſpective ends, becauſe thoſe ends cannot be attained without them.

You ſay farther, "Cutting for the ſtone is not always "neceſſary in order to the cure: but the penalties you "ſpeak of are altogether neceſſary (without extraor-"dinary grace) to cure that pernicious and otherwiſe "untractable averſion." Let it be ſo; but do the ſurgeons know who has this ſtone, this averſion, ſo that it will certainly deſtroy him, unleſs he be cut? Will you undertake to tell when the averſion is ſuch in any man, that it is incurable by preaching, exhortation, and intreaty, if his ſpiritual phyſician will be inſtant with him in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon; but certainly curable, if moderate force be made uſe of? Till you are ſure of the former of theſe, you can never ſay your moderate force is neceſſary: Till you are ſure of the latter, you can never ſay, it is competent means. What you will determine concerning extraordinary grace, and when God beſtows that, I leave you to conſider, and ſpeak clearly of it at your leiſure.

You add, that even where "cutting for the ſtone is "neceſſary, it is withal hazardous by my confeſſion. "But your penalties can no way endanger or hurt the "ſoul, but by the fault of him that undergoes them." If the magiſtrate uſe force to bring men to the true religion, he muſt judge which is the true religion; and he can judge no other to be it but that which he believes to be the true religion, which is his own religion. But for the magiſtrate to uſe force to bring men to his own religion, has ſo much danger in it to men's ſouls, that by your own confeſſion, none but an atheiſt will ſay that magiſtrates may uſe force to bring men to their own religion.

This I ſuppoſe is enough to make good all that I aimed at in my inſtance of cutting for the ſtone, which was, that though it were judged uſeful, and I add now neceſſary to cut men for the ſtone, yet that was not enough to authorize a ſurgeon to cut a man, but he muſt have, beſides that general one of doing good, ſome more ſpecial commiſſion; and that which I there mentioned,

tioned, was the patient's conſent. But you tell me, "That though, as things now ſtand, no ſurgeon has "any right to cut his calculous patient without his "conſent; yet if the magiſtrate ſhould by a public law "appoint and authorize a competent number of the "moſt ſkilful in that art, to viſit ſuch as labour under "that diſeaſe, and to cut thoſe (whether they conſent "or not) whoſe lives they unanimouſly judge it impoſ-"ſible to ſave otherwiſe: you are apt to think I would "find it hard to prove that in ſo doing he exceeded the "bounds of his power: and you are ſure it would be "as hard to prove that thoſe artiſts would have no right "in that caſe to cut ſuch perſons." Show ſuch a law from the great governor of the univerſe, and I ſhall yield that your ſurgeons ſhall go to work as faſt as you pleaſe. But where is the public law? "Where is the "competent number of magiſtrates ſkilful in the art, "who muſt unanimouſly judge of the diſeaſe and its "danger?" You can ſhow nothing of all this, yet you are ſo liberal of this ſort of cure, that one cannot take you for leſs than cutting Morecraft himſelf. But, ſir, if there were a competent number of ſkilful and impartial men, who were to uſe the inciſion-knife on all in whom they found this ſtone of averſion to the true religion; what do you think, would they find no work in your hoſpital?

Averſion to the true religion you ſay is of abſolute neceſſity to be cured: what I beſeech you is that true religion? that of the church of England? For that you own to be the only true religion; and whatever you ſay, you cannot upon your principles name any other national religion in the world, that you will own to be the true. It being then of abſolute neceſſity that men's averſion to the national religion of England ſhould be cured: has all mankind in whom it has been abſolutely neceſſary to be cured, been furniſhed with competent and neceſſary means for the cure of this averſion?

In the next place, what is your neceſſary and ſufficient means for this cure that is of abſolute neceſſity? and that is moderate penalties made uſe of by the magiſtrate, where the national is the true religion, and

ſufficient means are provided for all men's inſtruction in the true religion. And here again I aſk, have all men to whom this cure is of abſolute neceſſity, been furniſhed with this neceſſary means?

Thirdly, How is your neceſſary remedy to be applied? And that is in a way wherein it cannot work the cure, though we ſhould ſuppoſe the true religion the national every-where, and all the magiſtrates in the world zealous for it. To this true religion ſay you men have a natural and great averſion of abſolute neceſſity to be cured, and the only cure for it is force your way applied, i. e. penalties muſt be laid upon all that diſſent from the national religion, till they conform. Why are men averſe to the true? Becauſe it croſſes the profits and pleaſures of this life; and for the ſame reaſon they have an averſion to penalties: theſe, therefore, if they be oppoſed one to another, and penalties be ſo laid that men muſt quit their luſts, and heartily embrace the true religion, or elſe endure the penalties, there may be ſome efficacy in force towards bringing men to the true religion: but if there be no oppoſition between an outward profeſſion of the true religion, and men's luſts; penalties laid on men till they outwardly conform, are not a remedy laid to the diſeaſe. Puniſhments ſo applied have no oppoſition to men's luſts, nor from thence can be expected any cure. Men muſt be driven from their averſion to the true religion by penalties they have a greater averſion to. This is all the operation of force. But if by getting into the communion of the national church they can avoid the penalties, and yet retain their natural corruption and averſion to the true religion, what remedy is there to the diſeaſe by penalties ſo applied? You would, you ſay, have men made uneaſy. This no doubt will work on men, and make them endeavour to get out of this uneaſy ſtate as ſoon as they can. But it will always be by that way wherein they can be moſt eaſy; for it is the uneaſineſs alone they fly from, and therefore they will not exchange one uneaſineſs for another; not for a greater, nor an equal, nor any at all, if they can help it. If therefore it be ſo uneaſy for men to mortify their luſts, as you tell us, which the

the true religion requires of them, if they embrace it in earneſt; but which outward conformity to the true religion, or any national church, does not require; what need or uſe is there of force applied ſo, that it meets not at all with men's luſts, or averſion to the true religion, but leaves them the liberty of a quiet enjoyment of them, free from force and penalties in a legal and approved conformity? Is a man negligent of his ſoul, and will not be brought to conſider? obſtinate, and will not embrace the truth? is he careleſs, and will not be at the pains to examine matters of religion? corrupt, and will not part with his luſts, which are dearer to him than his firſt-born? It is but owning the national profeſſion, and he may be ſo ſtill: if he conform, the magiſtrate has done puniſhing, he is a ſon of the church, and need not conſider any thing farther for fear of penalties; they are removed, and all is well. So that at laſt there neither being an abſolute neceſſity that averſion to the true religion ſhould in all men be cured: nor the magiſtrate being a competent judge who have this ſtone of averſion, or who have it to that degree as to need force to cure it, or in whom it is curable, were force a proper remedy, as it is not: nor having any commiſſion to uſe it, notwithſtanding what you have anſwered: it is ſtill not only as, but more reaſonable for the magiſtrate, upon pretence of its uſefulneſs or neceſſity, to cut any one for the ſtone without his own conſent, than to uſe force your way to cure him of averſion to the true religion.

To my queſtion, in whoſe hands this right, we were a little above ſpeaking of, was in Turky, Perſia or China? you tell me, "you anſwer roundly and plainly, "in the hands of the ſovereign, to uſe convenient pe- "nalties for the promoting the true religion." I will not trouble you here with a queſtion you will meet with elſewhere, who in theſe countries muſt be judge of the true religion? But I will aſk, whether you or any wiſe man would have put a right of uſing force into a mahommedan or pagan prince's hand, for the promoting of chriſtianity? Which of my pagans or mahommedans would have done otherwiſe?

But

But God, you say, has done it, and you make it good by telling me in the following words, "If this startle "me, then you must tell me farther, that you look "upon the supreme power to be the same all the world "over, in what hands soever it is placed, and this right "to be contained in it: and if those that have it do "not use it as they ought, but instead of promoting "true religion by proper penalties set themselves to "inforce mohammedism or paganism, or any other false "religion: all that can, or that needs be said to the "matter, is, that God will one day call them to an "account for the neglect of their duty, for the dishonour they do to him, and for the souls that perish by "their fault." Your taking this right to be a part of the supreme power of all civil sovereigns, which is the thing in question, is not, as I take it, proving it to be so. But let us take it so for once, what then is your answer? "God will one day call those sovereigns to an "account for the neglect of their duty." The question is not, what God will do with the sovereigns who have neglected their duty; but how mankind is furnished with your competent means of promoting God's honour in the world, and the good of souls in countries where the sovereign is of a wrong religion? For there, how clearly soever the right of using it be in the sovereign, yet as long as he uses not force to bring his subjects to the true religion, they are destitute of your competent means. For I imagine you do not make the right to use that force, but the actual application of it by penal laws, to be your useful and necessary means. For if you think the bare having that right be enough, if that be your sufficient means without the actual use of force, we readily allow it you. And, as I tell you elsewhere, I see not then what need you had of miracles "to supply the want of the magistrates assistance "till christianity was supported and encouraged by the "laws of the empire:" for, by your own rule, the magistrates of the world, during the three first centuries after the publishing the christian religion, had the same right, if that had been enough, that they have now in Turky, Persia, or China. That this is all that can be said

ſaid in this matter, I eaſily grant you; but that it is all that needs be ſaid to make good your doctrine, I muſt beg your pardon.

In the ſame ſentence wherein you tell me, I ſhould have added neceſſity to uſefulneſs, I call it neceſſary uſefulneſs, which I imagine is not much different. But that with the following words wherein my argument lay, had the ill luck to be overſeen; but if you pleaſe to take my argument, as I have now again laid it before you, it will ſerve my turn.

In your next paragraph you tell me, that what is ſaid by me is with the ſame ingenuity I have uſed in other places; my words in that place are theſe: "The au-" thor having endeavoured to ſhow that no-body at all, " of any rank or condition, had any power to puniſh, " torment, or uſe any man ill for matters of religion: " you tell us, you do not yet underſtand why clergy-" men are not as capable of ſuch power as other men;" which words of mine containing in them nothing but true matter of fact, give you no reaſon to tax my ingenuity: nor will what you allege make it otherwiſe than ſuch power; for if the power you there ſpeak of were externally coactive power, is not that the ſame power the author was ſpeaking of, made uſe of to thoſe ends he mentions of tormenting and puniſhing? And do not you own that thoſe who have that power, ought to puniſh thoſe who offend in rejecting the true religion? As to the remaining part of that paragraph, I ſhall leave the reader to judge whether I ſought any occaſion ſo much as to name the clergy; or whether the itching of your fingers to be handling the rod guided not your pen to what was nothing to the purpoſe: for the author had not ſaid any thing ſo much as tending to exclude the clergy from ſecular employments, but only, if you will take your own report of it, that no eccleſiaſtical officer, as ſuch, has any externally coactive power; whereupon you cry out, that "you do not yet under-" ſtand why eccleſiaſtics or clergymen are not as capa-" ble of ſuch power as other men." Had you ſtood to be conſtable of your pariſh, or of the hundred, you might have had cauſe to vindicate thus your capacity,

if

if orders had been objected to you; or if your aim be at a juſtice of the peace, or lord chief juſtice of England, much more. However you muſt be allowed to be a man of forecaſt, in clearing the way to ſecular power, if you know yourſelf, or any of your friends deſirous of it: otherwiſe I confeſs you have reaſon to be on this occaſion a little out of humour, as you are, for bringing this matter in queſtion ſo wholly out of ſeaſon. Nor will, I fear, the ill-fitted excuſe you bring, give yourſelf, or one who conſults the places in both yours and the author's letter, a much better opinion of it. However I cannot but thank you for your wonted ingenuity, in ſaying, that "it ſeems I wanted an occaſion "to ſhow my good-will to the clergy, and ſo I made "myſelf one." And to find more work for the excellent gift you have this way, I deſire you to read over that paragraph of mine again, and tell me, whether you can find any thing ſaid in it not true? Any advice in it that you yourſelf would diſown? any thing that any worthy clergyman that adorns his function is concerned in? And when you have ſet it down in my words, the world ſhall be judge, whether I have ſhowed any ill-will to the clergy. Till then I may take the liberty to own, that I am more a friend to them and their calling, than thoſe amongſt them who ſhow their forwardneſs to leave the word of God to ſerve other employments. The office of a miniſter of the goſpel requires ſo the whole man, that the very looking after their poor was, by the joint voice of the twelve apoſtles, called "leav-"ing the word of God, and ſerving of tables." Acts iv. 2. But if you think no men's faults can be ſpoken of without ill-will, you will make a very ill preacher: or if you think this to be ſo only in ſpeaking of miſtakes in any of the clergy, there muſt be in your opinion ſomething peculiar in their caſe, that makes it ſo much a fault to mention any of theirs; which I muſt be pardoned for, ſince I was not aware of it: and there will want but a little cool reflection to convince you, that had not the preſent church of England a greater number in proportion, than poſſibly any other age of the church ever had, of thoſe who by their pious lives

and

and labours in their miniſtry adorn their profeſſion; ſuch buſy men as cannot be content to be divines without being laymen too, would ſo little keep up the reputation which ought to diſtinguiſh the clergy, or preſerve the eſteem due to a holy, *i. e.* a ſeparate order; that nobody can ſhow greater good-will to them than by taking all occaſions to put a ſtop to any forwardneſs to be meddling out of their calling. This, I ſuppoſe, made a learned prelate of our church, out of kindneſs to the clergy, mind them of their ſtipulation and duty in a late treatiſe, and tell them that "the paſtoral care is "to be a man's entire buſineſs, and to poſſeſs both "his thoughts and his time." Diſc. of Paſt. Care, p. 121.

To your ſaying, "That the magiſtrate may lay pe-"nalties upon thoſe who refuſe to embrace the doctrine "of the proper miniſters of religion, or are alienated from "the truth:" I anſwered, "God never gave the ma-"giſtrate an authority to be judge of truth for another "man." This you grant; but withal ſay, "That if "the magiſtrate knows the truth, though he has no au-"thority to judge of truth for another man; yet he "may be judge whether other men be alienated from "the truth or no; and ſo may have authority to lay "ſome penalties upon thoſe whom he ſees to be ſo, to "bring them to judge more ſincerely for themſelves." For example, the doctrine of the proper miniſters of religion is, that the three creeds, Nice, Athanaſius's, and that commonly called the Apoſtles Creed, ought to be thoroughly received and believed: as alſo that the Old and New Teſtament contain all things neceſſary to ſalvation. The one of theſe doctrines a papiſt ſubject embraces not; and a ſocinian the other. What now is the magiſtrate by your commiſſion to do? He is to lay penalties upon them, and continue them: How long? Only till they conform, *i. e.* till they profeſs they embrace theſe doctrines for true. In which caſe he does not judge of the truth for other men: he only judges that other men are alienated from the truth. Do you not now admire your own ſubtilty and acuteneſs? I

that

that cannot comprehend this, tell you my dull ſenſe in the caſe. He that thinks another man in an errour, judges him, as you phraſe it, alienated from the truth, and then judges of truth and falſhood only for himſelf. But if he lays any penalty upon others, which they are to lie under till they embrace for a truth what he judges to be ſo, he is then ſo far a judge of truth for thoſe others. This is what I think to judge of truth for another means: If you will tell me what elſe it ſignifies, I am ready to learn.

" You grant, you ſay, God never gave the magiſtrate " any authority to be judge of truth for another man :" and then add, " But how does it follow from thence that " he cannot be judge, whether any man be alienated " from the truth or no?" And I aſk you, who ever ſaid any ſuch thing did follow from thence? That which I ſay, and which you ought to diſprove, is, that whoever puniſhes others for not being of the religion he judges to be true, judges of truth for others. But you prove that a man may be judge of truth, without having authority to judge of it for other men, or to preſcribe to them what they ſhall believe, which you might have ſpared, till you meet with ſomebody that denies it. But yet your proof of it is worth remembering: " rectum, ſay you, eſt index ſui & obliqui. And cer- " tainly whoever does but know the truth, may eaſily " judge whether other men be alienated from it or no." But though " rectum be index ſui & obliqui;" yet a man may be ignorant of that which is the right, and may take errour for truth. The truth of religion, when known, ſhows what contradicts it is falſe: but yet that truth may be unknown to the magiſtrate, as well as to any other man. But you conclude, I know not upon what ground, as if the magiſtrate could not miſs it, or were ſurer to find it than other men. I ſuppoſe you are thus favourable only to the magiſtrate of your own profeſſion, as no doubt in civility a papiſt or a preſbyterian would be to thoſe of his. And then infer: " And " therefore if the magiſtrate knows the truth, though " he has no authority to judge of truth for other men,

" yet

" yet he may judge whether other men be alienated " from the truth or no." Without doubt! who denies it him? It is a privilege that he and all men have, that when they know the truth, or believe the truth, or have embraced an errour for truth, they may judge whether other men are alienated from it or no, if thoſe other men own their opinions in that matter.

You go on with your inference, " and ſo may have " authority to lay ſome penalties upon thoſe whom he " ſees to be ſo." Now, ſir, you go a little too faſt. This he cannot do without making himſelf judge of truth for them: the magiſtrate, or any one, may judge as much as he pleaſes of men's opinions and errours; he in that judges only for himſelf: but as ſoon as he uſes force to bring them from their own to his opinion, he makes himſelf judge of truth for them; let it be to bring them to judge more ſincerely for themſelves, as you here call it, or under what pretence or colour ſoever, for that what you ſay is but a pretence, the very expreſſion diſcovers. For does any one ever judge inſincerely for himſelf, that he needs penalties to make him judge more ſincerely for himſelf? A man may judge wrong for himſelf, and may be known or thought to do ſo: but who can either know or ſuppoſe another is not ſincere in the judgment he makes for himſelf, or, which is the ſame thing, that any one knowingly puts a mixture of falſhood into the judgment he makes? for as ſpeaking inſincerely is to ſpeak otherwiſe than one thinks, let what he ſays be true or falſe; ſo judging inſincerely muſt be to judge otherwiſe than one thinks, which I imagine is not very feaſible. But how improper ſoever it be to talk of judging inſincerely for one's ſelf, it was better for you in that place to ſay, penalties were to bring men to judge more ſincerely, rather than to ſay, more rightly, or more truly: for had you ſaid, the magiſtrate might uſe penalties to bring men to judge more truly, that very word had plainly diſcovered, that he made himſelf a judge of truth for them. You therefore wiſely choſe to ſay what might beſt cover this contradiction to yourſelf, whether it were ſenſe or no; which perhaps

perhaps whilſt it ſounded well, every one would not ſtand to examine.

One thing give me leave here to obſerve to you, which is, that when you ſpeak of the entertainment ſubjects are to give to truth, *i. e.* the true religion, you call it believing; but this in the magiſtrate you call knowing. Now let me aſk you, whether any magiſtrate, who laid penalties on any who diſſented from what he judged the true religion, or, as you call it here, were alienated from the truth; was or could be determined in his judging of that truth by any aſſurance greater than believing? When you have reſolved that, you will then ſee to what purpoſe is all you have ſaid here concerning the magiſtrate's knowing the truth; which at laſt amounting to no more than the aſſurance wherewith a man certainly believes and receives a thing for true, will put every magiſtrate under the ſame, if there be any obligation to uſe force, whilſt he believes his own religion. Beſides, if a magiſtrate knows his religion to be true, he is to uſe means not to make his people believe, but know it alſo; knowledge of them, if that be the way of entertaining the truths of religion, being as neceſſary to the ſubjects as the magiſtrate. I never heard yet of a maſter of mathematics, who had the care of informing of others in thoſe truths, who ever went about to make any one believe one of Euclid's propoſitions.

The pleaſantneſs of your anſwer, notwithſtanding what you ſay, doth remain ſtill the ſame: for you making, as is to be ſeen, "the power of the magiſtrate "ORDAINED for the bringing men to take ſuch care as "they ought of their ſalvation;" the reaſon why it is every man's intereſt to veſt this power in the magiſtrate, muſt ſuppoſe this power ſo ordained, before the people veſted it; or elſe it could not be an argument for their veſting it in the magiſtrate. For if you had not here built upon your fundamental ſuppoſition, that this power of the magiſtrate is ordained by God to that end, the proper and intelligible way of expreſſing your meaning had not been to ſay as you do; "As the power

"of

" of the magiſtrate is ordained for bringing, &c. ſo if " we ſuppoſe this POWER veſted in the magiſtrate by " the people:" in which way of ſpeaking, this power of the magiſtrate is evidently ſuppoſed already ordained. But a clear way of making your meaning underſtood had been to ſay, That for the people to ordain ſuch a power of the magiſtrate, or to veſt ſuch a power in the magiſtrate, which is the ſame thing, was their true intereſt: but whether it were your meaning, or your expreſſion that was guilty of the abſurdity, I ſhall leave it with the reader.

As to the other pleaſant thing of your anſwer, it will ſtill appear by barely reciting it: the pleaſant thing I charge on you is, that you ſay, That " the power of " the magiſtrate is to bring men to ſuch a care of their " ſalvation, that they may not blindly leave it to the " choice of any perſon, or their own luſts or paſſions, " to preſcribe to them what faith or worſhip they ſhall " embrace;" and yet that it is their beſt courſe " to " veſt a power in the magiſtrate," liable to the ſame luſts and paſſions as themſelves, to chooſe for them. To this you anſwer, by aſking, where it is that you ſay that it is the people's beſt courſe to veſt a power in the magiſtrate to chooſe for them? That you tell me I do not pretend to ſhow. If you had given yourſelf the pains to have gone on to the end of the paragraph, or will be pleaſed to read it as I have here again ſet it down for your peruſal, you will find that I at leaſt pretended to ſhow it: my words are theſe: " If they veſt a power " in the magiſtrate to puniſh them when they diſſent " from his religion, to bring them to act even againſt " their own inclination, according to reaſon and ſound " judgment," which is, as you explain yourſelf in another place, " to bring them to conſider reaſons and " arguments proper and ſufficient to convince them; " how far is this from leaving it to the choice of an- " other man to preſcribe to them what faith or wor- " ſhip they ſhall embrace?" Thus far you cite my words, to which let me join the remaining part of the paragraph, to let you ſee that I pretended to ſhow that the courſe you propoſed to the people as beſt for them,

was to veſt a power in the magiſtrate to chooſe for them. My words which follow thoſe where you left off, are theſe: "Eſpecially if we conſider, that you think it a "ſtrange thing, that the author would have the care of "every man's ſoul left to himſelf alone. So that this "care being veſted in the magiſtrate, with a power to "puniſh men to make them conſider reaſons and argu-"ments proper and ſufficient to convince them of the "truth of his religion; the choice is evidently in the "magiſtrate, as much as it can be in the power of one "man to chooſe for another what religion he ſhall be "of; which conſiſts only in a power of compelling "him by puniſhments to embrace it." But all this you tell me "is juſt nothing to the purpoſe:" Why, I beſeech you? "Becauſe you ſpeak not of the magi-"ſtrate's religion, but of the true religion, and that "propoſed with ſufficient evidence."

The caſe in ſhort is this: men are apt to be miſled by their paſſions, luſts, and other men, in the choice of their religion. For this great evil you propoſe a remedy, which is, that men (for you muſt remember you are here ſpeaking of the people putting this power into the magiſtrate's hand) ſhould chooſe ſome of their fellow-men, and give them a power by force to guard them, that they might not be alienated from the truth by their own paſſions, luſts, or by other men. So it was in the firſt ſcheme; or, as you have it now, to puniſh them, whenever they rejected the true religion, and that propoſed with ſufficient evidence of the truth of it. A pretty remedy, and manifeſtly effectual at firſt ſight; that becauſe men were all promiſcuouſly apt to be miſled in their judgment, or choice of their religion, by paſſion, luſt, and other men, therefore they ſhould chooſe ſome amongſt themſelves, who might, they and their ſucceſſors, men made juſt like themſelves, puniſh them that rejected the true religion.

"If the blind lead the blind, both ſhall fall into the "ditch," ſays our Saviour. If men apt to be miſled by their paſſions and luſts, will guard themſelves from falling into errour, by puniſhments laid on them, by men as apt to be miſled by paſſions and luſts as themſelves,

ſelves, how are they ſafer from falling into errour? Now hear the infallible remedy for this inconvenience, and admire: the men to whom they have given this power, muſt not uſe it, till they find thoſe who gave it them in an errour. A friend, to whom I ſhowed this expedient, anſwered, This is none: For why is not a man as fit to judge for himſelf when he is in an errour, as another to judge for him, who is as liable to errour himſelf? I anſwered, This power however in the other can do him no harm, but may indirectly and at a diſtance do him good; becauſe the magiſtrate who has this power to puniſh him, muſt never uſe it but when he is in the right, and he that is puniſhed is in the wrong. But, ſaid my friend, who ſhall be judge whether he be in the right or no? For men in an errour think themſelves in the right, and that as confidently as thoſe who are moſt ſo. To which I replied, Nobody muſt be judge; but the magiſtrate may know when he is in the right. And ſo may the ſubject too, ſaid my friend, as well as the magiſtrate, and therefore it was as good ſtill to be free from a puniſhment, that gives a man no more ſecurity from errour than he had without it. Beſides, ſaid he, who muſt be judge whether the magiſtrate knows or no? For he may miſtake, and think it to be knowledge and certainty, when it is but opinion and belief. It is no matter, for that in this ſcheme, replied I, the magiſtrate, we are told, may know which is the true religion, and he muſt not uſe force but to bring men to the true religion; and if he does, God will one day call him to an account for it, and ſo all is ſafe. As ſafe as beating the air can make a thing, replied my friend, for if believing, being aſſured, confidently being perſuaded that they know that the religion they profeſs is true, or any thing elſe ſhort of true knowledge, will ſerve the turn, all magiſtrates will have this power alike, and ſo men will be well guarded, or recovered from falſe religions, by putting it into the magiſtrate's hand to puniſh them when they have alienated themſelves from it.

If the magiſtrate be not to puniſh men but when he knows, *i. e.* is infallibly certain, (for ſo is a man in what he knows,) that his national religion is all true, and knows alſo, that it has been propoſed to thoſe he puniſhes with ſufficient evidence of the truth of it: it would have been as good this power had never been given him, ſince he will never be in a condition to exerciſe it: and at beſt it was given him to no purpoſe, ſince thoſe who gave it him were one with another as little indiſpoſed to conſider impartially, examine diligently, ſtudy, find, and infallibly know the truth, as he. But, ſaid he at parting, to talk thus of the magiſtrate's puniſhing men that reject the true religion, without telling us who thoſe magiſtrates are, who have a power to judge which is the true religion, is to put this power in all magiſtrates hands alike, or none; for to ſay he only is to be judge which is the true religion, who is of it, is but to begin the round of inquiries again, which can at laſt end no where but in every one's ſuppoſing his own to be it. But, ſaid he, if you will continue to talk on thus, there is nothing more to be done with you, but to pity or laugh at you; and ſo he left me.

I aſſure you, Sir, I urged this part of your hypotheſis, with all the advantage I thought your anſwer afforded me; and if I have erred in it, or there be any way to get out of the ſtrait, (if force muſt in your way be uſed) either of the magiſtrate's puniſhing men for rejecting the true religion, without judging which is the true religion; or elſe that the magiſtrate ſhould judge which is the true religion; which way ever of the two you ſhall determine it, I ſee not what advantage it can be to the people, to keep them from chooſing amiſs, that this power of puniſhing them ſhall be put into the magiſtrate's hands.

And then, if the magiſtrate muſt judge which is the true religion; as how he ſhould, without judging, puniſh any one who rejects it, is hard to find; and puniſh men who reject it until they embrace it, let it be to make them conſider, or what you pleaſe, he does, I

think, chooſe their religion for them. And if you have not the dexterity to chooſe the national religion wherever you are, I doubt not but that you would think ſo too if you were in France, though there were none but moderate penalties laid on you to bring you even againſt your own inclination to act according to what they there call reaſon and ſound judgment.

That paragraph and mine to which it is an anſwer run thus:

L. II. p. 427.— " I do neither you " nor the magiſ- " trate injury when " I ſay that the " power you give " the magiſtrate of " puniſhing men, " to make them " conſider reaſons " and arguments " proper and ſuffi- " cient to convince " them, is to con- " vince them of the " truth of his reli- " gion, and to bring " them to it. For " men will never, " in his opinion, " act according to " reaſon and ſound " judgment, which " is the thing you " here ſay men " ſhould be brought " to by the magi- " ſtrate, even a- " gainſt their own " inclination, till " they embrace his " religion.

L. III. p. 67. " But it ſeems " you have not done with this " yet: For you ſay," you do neither me nor the magiſtrate injury, when you ſay that the power I give the magiſtrate, of puniſhing men to make them conſider reaſons and arguments proper and ſufficient to convince them, is to convince them of the truth of his religion, whatever that be, and to bring them to it. " Which ſeems " a little ſtrange and pleaſant too. " But thus you prove it:" For men will never, in his opinion, act according to reaſon and ſound judgment, till they embrace his religion. And if you have the brow of an honeſt man, you will not ſay the magiſtrate will ever puniſh you, to bring you to conſider any other reaſons and arguments but ſuch as are proper to convince you of the truth of his religion, and to bring you to that. Which (beſides the pleaſant talk of ſuch reaſons and arguments as are proper and ſufficient to convince men of the truth of the magiſtrate's religion, " though it be " a falſe one) is juſt as much as to " ſay,

" religion. And if " you have the brow " of an honeſt man, " you will not ſay " the magiſtrate " will ever puniſh " you, to bring you " to conſider any " other reaſons and " arguments, but " ſuch as are pro- " per to convince " you of the truth " of his religion, " and to bring you " to that. Thus " you ſhift forwards " and backwards. " You ſay, the ma- " giſtrate has no " power to puniſh " men to compel " them to his reli- " gion; but only to " compel them to " conſider reaſons " and arguments " proper to con- " vince them of the " truth of his reli- " gion; which is " all one as to ſay, " nobody has pow- " er to chooſe your " way for you to " Jeruſalem; but " yet the lord of " the manor has " power to puniſh " you, to bring you " to conſider rea- ſons

" ſay, It is ſo, becauſe in the ma- " giſtrate's opinion it is ſo; and " becauſe it is not to be expected " that he will act againſt his opi- " nion. As if the magiſtrate's " opinion could change the na- " ture of things, and turn a " power to promote the true re- " ligion into a power to promote " a falſe one. No, Sir, the ma- " giſtrate's opinion has no ſuch " virtue. It may indeed keep " him from exerciſing the power " he has to promote the true re- " ligion; and it may lead him to " abuſe the pretence of it to the " promoting a falſe one: but it " can neither deſtroy that power, " nor make it any thing but what " it is. And therefore, whatever " the magiſtrate's opinion be, his " power was given him (as the " apoſtles power was to them) for " edification only, not for deſtruc- " tion: And it may always be ſaid " of him, (what St. Paul ſaid of " himſelf) that he can do nothing " againſt the truth, but for the " truth. And therefore if the " magiſtrate puniſhes me to bring " me to a falſe religion; it is not " his opinion that will excuſe " him, when he comes to anſwer " for it to his judge. For cer- " tainly men are as accountable " for their opinions (thoſe of " them, I mean, which influence " their practice) as they are for " their actions."

" Here is therefore no ſhifting " forwards and backwards, as you " pretend;

" ſons and argu-
" ments proper and
" ſufficient to con-
" vince you. Of
" what? that the
" way he goes in,
" is the right, and
" ſo to make you
" join in company,
" and go along with
" him. So that, in
" effect, what is all
" your going about,
" but to come at
" laſt to the ſame
" place again; and
" put a power into
" the magiſtrate's
" hands, under an-
" other pretence,
" to compel men
" to his religion;
" which uſe of force
" the author has
" ſufficiently over-
" thrown, and you
" yourſelf have
" quitted. But I
" am tired to fol-
" low you ſo often
" round the ſame
" circle."

" pretend; nor any circle, but
" in your own imagination. For
" though it be true that I ſay,"
the magiſtrate has no power to puniſh men, to compel them to his religion, " yet I no where ſay,
" nor will it follow from any thing
" I do ſay," That he has power to compel them to conſider reaſons and arguments proper to convince them of the truth of his religion. " But I do not much
" wonder that you endeavour to
" put this upon me. For I think
" by this time it is pretty plain,
" that otherwiſe you would have
" but little to ſay: and it is an art
" very much in uſe amongſt ſome
" ſort of learned men, when they
" cannot confute what an adver-
" ſary does ſay, to make him ſay
" what he does not; that they
" may have ſomething which they
" can confute."

The beginning of this anſwer is part of the old ſong of triumph: " What! reaſons and arguments proper " and ſufficient to convince men of the truth of falſe-" hood?" Yes, Sir, the magiſtrate may uſe force to make men conſider thoſe reaſons and arguments, which he thinks proper and ſufficient to convince men of the truth of his religion, though his religion be a falſe one. And this is as poſſible for him to do, as for a man as

learned as yourself to write a book, and use such arguments, as he thinks proper and sufficient to convince men of the truth of his opinion, though it be a falsehood.

As to the remaining part of your answer, the question is not, whether the "magistrate's opinion can "change the nature of things, or the power he has, or "excuse him to his judge for misusing of it?" But this, that since all magistrates, in your opinion, have commission, and are obliged to promote the true religion by force, and they can be guided in the discharge of this duty by nothing but their own opinion of the true religion, what advantage can this be to the true religion, what benefit to their subjects, or whether it amounts to any more than a commission to every magistrate to use force for the promoting his own religion? To this question therefore you will do well to apply your answer, which a man of less skill than you will be scarce able to do.

You tell us indeed, that "whatever the magistrate's "opinion be, his power was given him (as the apostles "power was to them) for edification only, and not for "destruction." But if the apostles power had been given them for one end, and St. Paul, St. Peter, and nine other of the twelve had nothing to guide them but their own opinion, which led them to another end; I ask you whether the edification of the church could have been carried on as it was?

You tell us farther, that "it may always be said of "the magistrate (what St. Paul said of himself) that "he can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." Witness the king of France. If you say this in the same sense that St. Paul said it of himself, who, in all things requisite for edification, had the immediate direction and guidance of the unerring spirit of God, and so was infallible, we need not go to Rome for an infallible guide, every country has one in their magistrate. If you apply these words to the magistrate in another sense, than what St. Paul spoke them in of himself, sober men will be apt to think, you have a great care to insinuate into others a high veneration for the magistrate; but

that

that you yourſelf have no over great reverence for the ſcripture, which you thus uſe; nor for truth, which you thus defend.

To deny the magiſtrate to have a power to compel men to his religion; but yet to ſay the magiſtrate has a power, and is bound to puniſh men to make them conſider, till they ceaſe to reject the true religion; of which true religion he muſt be judge, or elſe nothing can be done in diſcharge of this his duty; is ſo like going round about to come to the ſame place, that it will always be a circle in mine and other people's imagination, and not only there, but in your hypotheſis.

All that you ſay turns upon the truth or falſhood of this propoſition: "That whoever puniſhes any one in "matters of religion to make him conſider, takes up- "on him to be judge for another what is right in mat- "ters of religion." This you think plainly involves a contradiction; and ſo it would, if theſe general terms had in your uſe of them their ordinary and uſual meaning. But, Sir, be but pleaſed to take along with you, that whoever puniſhes any man your way in matters of religion, to make him conſider, as you uſe the word conſider, takes upon him to be judge for another what is right in matters of religion: and you will find it ſo far from a contradiction, that it is a plain truth. For your way of puniſhing is a peculiar way, and is this: that the magiſtrate, where the national religion is the true religion, ſhould puniſh thoſe who diſſent from it, to make them conſider as they ought, *i. e.* till they ceaſe to reject, or, in other words, till they conform to it. If therefore he puniſhes none but thoſe who diſſent from, and puniſhes them till they conform to that which he judges the true religion, does he not take on him to judge for them what is the true religion?

It is true indeed what you ſay, there is no other reaſon to puniſh another to make him conſider, but that he ſhould judge for himſelf: and this will always hold true amongſt thoſe who, when they ſpeak of conſidering, mean conſidering, and nothing elſe. But then theſe things will follow from thence: 1. That in inflicting

flicting of penalties to make men consider, the magistrate of a country, where the national religion is false, no more misapplies his power, than he whose religion is true; for one has as much right to punish the negligent to make them consider, study, and examine matters of religion, as the other. 2. If the magistrate punishes men in matters of religion, truly to make them consider, he will punish all that do not consider, whether conformists or non-conformists. 3. If the magistrate punishes in matters of religion to make men consider, it is, as you say, "to make men judge for themselves: for there is no use of considering, but in order to judging." But then when a man has judged for himself, the penalties for not considering are to be taken off: for else your saying "that a man is punished "to make him consider, that he may judge for himself," is plain mockery. So that either you must reform your scheme, or allow this proposition to be true, *viz.* "Whoever punishes any man in matters of religion, to make him in your sense consider, takes upon "him to judge for another what is right in matters of "religion:" and with it the conclusion, *viz.* "Therefore whoever punishes any one in matters of religion, "to make him consider, takes upon him to do what "no man can do, and consequently misapplies his "power of punishing, if he has that power. Which "conclusion, you say, you should readily admit as sufficiently demonstrated, if the proposition before-mentioned were true."

But further, if it could enter into the head of any law-maker but you to punish men for the omission of, or to make them perform any internal act of the mind, such as is consideration; whoever in matters of religion would lay an injunction on men to make them consider, could not do it without judging for them in matters of religion; unless they had no religion at all, and then they come not within our author's toleration; which is a toleration only of men of different religions, or of different opinions in religion; for supposing you the magistrate with full power, and, as you imagined, right

right of puniſhing any one in matters of religion, how could you poſſibly puniſh any one to make him conſider, without judging for him what is right in matters of religion? I will ſuppoſe myſelf brought before your worſhip, under what character you pleaſe, and then I deſire to know what one or more queſtions you would aſk me, upon my anſwer to which you could judge me fit to be puniſhed to make me conſider, without taking upon you to judge for me what is right in matters of religion? For I conclude from the faſhion of my coat, or the colour of my eyes, you would not judge that I ought to be puniſhed in matters of religion to make me conſider. If you could, I ſhould allow you not only as capable, but much more capable of coactive power than other men.

But ſince you could not judge me to need puniſhment in matters of religion, to make me conſider, without knowing my thoughts concerning religion, we will ſuppoſe you, being of the church of England, would examine me in the catechiſm and liturgy of that church, which poſſibly I could neither ſay nor anſwer right to. It is like, upon this, you would judge me fit to be puniſhed to make me conſider. Wherein, it is evident, you judged for me, that the religion of the church of England was right; for without that judgment of yours you would not have puniſhed me. We will ſuppoſe you to go yet further, and examine me concerning the goſſpel, and truth of the principles of the chriſtian religion, and you will find me anſwer therein not to your liking: here again no doubt you will puniſh me to make me conſider; but is it not becauſe you judge for me, that the chriſtian religion is the right? Go on thus as far as you will, and till you find I had no religion at all, you could not puniſh me to make me conſider, without taking upon you to judge for me what is right in matters of religion.

To puniſh without a fault, is injuſtice; and to puniſh a man without judging him guilty of that fault, is alſo injuſtice; and to puniſh a man who has any religion to make him conſider, or, which is the ſame thing, for not having ſufficiently conſidered; is no more nor leſs, but

but punishing him for not being of the religion you think best for him; that is the fault, and that is the fault you judge him guilty of, call it considering as you please: for let him fall into the hands of a magistrate of whose religion he is, he judgeth him to have considered sufficiently. From whence it is plain, it is religion is judged of, and not consideration, or want of consideration. And it is in vain to pretend that he is punished to make him judge for himself; for he that is of any religion, has already judged for himself; and if you punish him after that, under pretence to make him consider that he may judge for himself; it is plain you punish him to make him judge otherwise than he has already judged, and to judge as you have judged for him.

Your next paragraph complains of my not having contradicted the following words of yours, which I had cited out of your A. p. 26. which that the reader may judge of, I shall here set down again: "And all the "hurt that comes to them by it, is only the suffering "some tolerable inconveniencies, for their following "the light of their own reason, and the dictates of "their own consciences: which certainly is no such "mischief to mankind, as to make it more eligible, "that there should be no such power vested in the ma-"gistrate; but the care of every man's soul should be "left to him alone, (as this author demands it should "be:) that is, that every man should be suffered quietly, "and without the least molestation, either to take no "care at all of his soul, if he be so pleased; or, in "doing it, to follow his own groundless prejudices, "or unaccountable humour, or any crafty seducer, "whom he may think fit to take for his guide." To which I shall here subjoin my answer and your reply:

L. II. p. 432. "Why should not "the care of every man's soul be "left to himself, "rather than the "magistrate? Is "the

L. III. p. 76. "Which words you "set down at large; but instead of "contradicting them, or offering to "show that the mischief spoken of, "is such as makes it more eligible, "&c. you only demand," Why should not the care of every man's soul

" the magiſtrate like to be more " concerned for " it? Is the ma- " giſtrate like to " take more care " of it? Is the ma- " giſtrate com- " monly more " careful of his " own, than other " men are of " theirs? Will " you ſay the ma- " giſtrate is leſs " expoſed, in " matters of reli- " gion, to preju- " dices, humours, " and crafty ſe- " ducers, than o- " ther men? If " you cannot lay " your hand on " your heart, and " ſay all this, what " then will be got " by the change? " And why may " not the care of " every man's " ſoul be left to " himſelf? Eſpe- " cially, if a man " be in ſo much " danger to miſs " the truth, who is " ſuffered quiet- " ly, and without " the leaſt moleſ- " tation, either to " take ſoul be left to himſelf, rather than the magiſtrate? Is the magiſtrate like to be more concerned for it? Is the magiſtrate like to take more care of it, &c. " As if not to leave the care " of every man's ſoul to himſelf " alone, were, as you expreſs it af- " terwards, to take the care of men's " ſouls from themſelves: or as if to " veſt a power in the magiſtrate, to " procure as much as in him lies " (i. e. as far as it can be procured " by convenient penalties) that men " take ſuch care of their ſouls as they " ought to do, were to leave the " care of their ſouls " to the magiſ- " trate rather than to themſelves:" " Which no man but yourſelf will " imagine. I acknowledge as freely " as you can do, that as every man " is more concerned than any man " elſe can be, ſo he is likewiſe more " obliged to take care of his ſoul; " and that no man can by any means " be diſcharged of the care of his " ſoul; which, when all is done, " will never be ſaved but by his own " care of it. But do I contradict " any thing of this, when I ſay, that " the care of every man's ſoul ought " not to be left to himſelf alone? Or, " that it is the intereſt of mankind, " that the magiſtrate be intruſted " and obliged to take care, as far as " lies in him, that no man neglect " his own ſoul? I thought, I con- " feſs, that every man was in ſome " ſort charged with the care of his " neighbour's ſoul. But, in your " way of reaſoning, he that affirms " this, takes away the care of every " man's

" take no care of " his ſoul, if he " be ſo pleaſed, " or to follow his " own prejudi- " ces," &c. For " if want of mo- " leſtation be the " dangerous ſtate " wherein men " are likelieſt to " miſs the right " way, it muſt be " confeſſed, that, " of all men, the " magiſtrate is " moſt in danger " to be in the " wrong; and ſo " the unfitteſt, if " you take the " care of men's " ſouls from " themſelves, of " all men, to be " intruſted with " it. For he ne- " ver meets with " that great and " only antidote of " yours againſt " errour, which " you here call " moleſtation. He " never has the " benefit of your " ſovereign reme- " dy, puniſhment, " to make him " conſider; which " you think ſo " neceſ- " man's ſoul from himſelf, and leaves " it to his neighbour rather than to " himſelf. But if this be plainly ab- " ſurd, as every one ſees it is, then " ſo it muſt be likewiſe to ſay, that " he that veſts ſuch a power as we " here ſpeak of in the magiſtrate, " takes away the care of men's ſouls " from themſelves, and places it in " the magiſtrate, rather than in " themſelves."

" What trifling then is it to ſay " here," If you cannot lay your hand upon your heart, and ſay all this, viz. that the magiſtrate is like to be more concerned for other men's ſouls than themſelves, &c. What then will be got by the change? " For it is plain, here is no ſuch " change as you would inſinuate: " but the care of ſouls which I aſſert " to the magiſtrate, is ſo far from " diſcharging any man of the care of " his own ſoul, or leſſening his obli- " gation to it, that it ſerves to no " other purpoſe in the world, but to " bring men, who otherwiſe would " not, to conſider and do what the " intereſt of their ſouls obliges them " to.

" It is therefore manifeſt, that the " thing here to be conſidered, is not, " whether the magiſtrate be" like to be more concerned for other men's ſouls, or to take more care of them than themſelves: nor, whether he be commonly more careful of his own ſoul, than other men are of theirs: nor, whether he be leſs expoſed, in matters of religion, to prejudices, humours, and crafty ſeducers, than other

" neceſſary, that you look on it as a moſt dangerous ſtate for men to be without it; and therefore tell us," It is every man's true intereſt, not to be left wholly to himſelf in matters of religion."

other men: nor yet, whether he be not more in danger to be in the wrong than other men, in regard that he never meets with that great and only antidote of mine (as you call it) againſt errour, which I here call moleſtation. " But the point upon " which this matter turns, is only " this, whether the ſalvation of ſouls " be not better provided for, if the " magiſtrate be obliged to procure, " as much as in him lies, that every " man take ſuch care as he ought of " his ſoul, than if he be not ſo obliged, " but the care of every man's ſoul be " left to himſelf alone? which certainly any man of " common ſenſe may eaſily determine. For as you " will not, I ſuppoſe, deny but God has more amply " provided for the ſalvation of your own ſoul, by obliging your neighbour, as well as yourſelf, to take care " of it; though it is poſſible your neighbour may not " be more concerned for it than yourſelf; or may not " be more careful of his own ſoul, than you are of " yours; or may be no leſs expoſed, in matters of religion, to prejudices, &c. than you are; becauſe if " you are yourſelf wanting to your own ſoul, it is more " likely that you will be brought to take care of it, if " your neighbour be obliged to admoniſh and exhort " you to it, than if he be not; though it may fall out " that he will not do what he is obliged to do in that " caſe. So I think it cannot be denied, but the ſalvation of all men's ſouls is better provided for, if beſides the obligation which every man has to take care " of his own ſoul (and that which every man's neighbour has likewiſe to do it) the magiſtrate alſo be intruſted and obliged to ſee that no man neglect his ſoul; " than it would be, if every man were left to himſelf " in this matter: becauſe though we ſhould admit that " the magiſtrate is not like to be, or is not ordinarily " more concerned for other men's ſouls, than they themſelves are, &c. it is nevertheleſs undeniably true ſtill,

" that

" that whoever neglects his ſoul, is more likely to be " brought to take care of it, if the magiſtrate be obli- " ged to do what lies in him to bring him to do it, than " if he be not. Which is enough to ſhow, that it is " every man's true intereſt, that the care of his ſoul " ſhould not be left to himſelf alone, but that the ma- " giſtrate ſhould be ſo far entruſted with it as I con- " tend that he is."

Your complaint of my not having formally contra- dicted the words above cited out of A. p. 26. looking as if there were ſome weighty argument in them: I muſt inform my reader, that they are ſubjoined to thoſe, where- in you recommend the uſe of force in matters of reli- gion, by the gain thoſe that are puniſhed ſhall make by it, though it be miſapplied by the magiſtrate to bring them to a wrong religion. So that theſe words of yours, " all the hurt that comes to them by it," is all the hurt that comes to men by a miſapplication of the magiſtrate's power, who being of a falſe religion, he uſes force to bring men to it. And then your pro- poſition ſtands thus, " That the ſuffering what you call " tolerable inconveniencies for their following the light " of their own reaſons, and the dictates of their own " conſciences, is no ſuch miſchief to mankind as to " make it more eligible, that there ſhould be no power " veſted in the magiſtrate" to uſe force to bring men to the true religion, though the magiſtrates miſapply this power, *i. e.* uſe it to bring men to their own reli- gion when falſe.

This is the ſum of what you ſay, if it has any cohe- rent meaning in it: for it being to ſhow the uſefulneſs of ſuch a power veſted in the magiſtrate, under the miſ- carriages and miſapplications it is in common practice obſerved to be liable to; can have no other ſenſe. But I having proved, that if ſuch a power be by the law of nature veſted in the magiſtrate, every magiſtrate is obliged to uſe it for the promoting of his religion as far as he believes it to be true, ſhall not much trouble my- ſelf, if like a man of art you ſhould uſe your ſkill to give it another ſenſe: for ſuch is your natural talent, or great

great caution, that you love to ſpeak indefinitely, and, as ſeldom as may be, leave yourſelf accountable for any propoſitions of a clear determined ſenſe; but under words of doubtful, but ſeeming plauſible ſignification, conceal a meaning, which plainly expreſſed would, at firſt ſight, appear to contradict your own poſitions, or common ſenſe? inſtances whereof, more than one, we have here in this ſentence of yours. For, 1. The words tolerable inconveniencies carry a very fair ſhow of ſome very ſlight matter; and yet, when we come to examine them, may comprehend any of thoſe ſeverities lately uſed in France; for theſe tolerable inconveniencies are the ſame you in this very page and elſewhere call convenient penalties. Convenient for what? In this very place they muſt be ſuch, as may keep men "from fol-"lowing their own groundleſs prejudices, unaccount-"able humours, and crafty ſeducers." And you tell us, the magiſtrate may require men "under convenient "penalties to forſake their falſe religions, and embrace "the true." Who now muſt be judge, in theſe caſes, what are convenient penalties? Common ſenſe will tell us, the magiſtrate that uſes them: but beſides, we have your word for it, that the magiſtrate's prudence and experience enable him to judge beſt what penalties do agree with your rule of moderation, which, as I have ſhown, is no rule at all. So that at laſt your tolerable inconveniencies are ſuch as the magiſtrate ſhall judge convenient to oppoſe to men's prejudices, humours, and to ſeducers; ſuch as he ſhall think convenient to bring men from their falſe religions, or to puniſh their rejecting the true: which, whether they will not reach men's eſtates and liberties, or go as far as any the king of France has uſed, is more than you can be ſecurity for. 2. Another ſet of good words we have here, which at firſt hearing are apt to engage men's concern, as if too much could not be done to recover men from ſo perilous a ſtate as they ſeem to deſcribe; and thoſe are "men following their own groundleſs prejudices, un-"accountable humours, or crafty ſeducers." Are not theſe expreſſions to ſet forth a deplorable condition, and

to move pity in all that hear them? Enough to make the unattentive reader ready to cry out, help for the Lord's sake! do any thing rather than suffer such poor prejudiced seduced people to be eternally lost! Where he that examines what persons these words can in your scheme describe, will find they are only such as any where dissent from those articles of faith, and ceremonies of outward worship, which the magistrate, or at least you his director, approve of; for whilst you talk thus of the true religion in general, and that so general, that you cannot allow yourself to descend so near to particulars, as to recommend the searching and study of the scriptures to find it; and that the power in the magistrate's hands to use force is to bring men to the true religion; I ask, whether you do not think, either he or you must be judge, which is the true religion, before he can exercise that power? and then he must use his force upon all those who dissent from it, who are then the prejudiced, humoursome, and seduced, you here speak of. Unless this be so, and the magistrate be judge, I ask, who shall resolve which is the prejudiced person, the prince with his politics, or he that suffers for his religion? Which the more dangerous seducer, Lewis XIV. with his dragoons, or Mr. Claud with his sermons? It will be no small difficulty to find out the persons who are guilty of following groundless prejudices, unaccountable humours, or crafty seducers, unless in those places where you shall be graciously pleased to decide the question; and out of the plenitude of your power and infallibility to declare which of the civil sovereigns now in being do, and which do not, espouse the one only true religion; and then we shall certainly know that those who dissent from the religion of those magistrates, are these prejudiced, humoursome, seduced persons.

But truly as you put it here, you leave the matter very perplexed, when you defend the eligibleness of vesting a power in the magistrate's hands, to remedy by penalties men's following their own groundless prejudices, unaccountable humours, and crafty seducers; when

when in the same sentence you suppose the magistrate, who is vested with this power, may inflict those penalties on men, "for their following the light of their own "reason, and the dictates of their own consciences;" which when you have considered, perhaps you will not think my answer so wholly beside the matter, though it showed you but that one absurdity, without a formal contradiction to so loose and undetermined a proposition, that it required more pains to unravel the sense of what was covered under deceitful expressions, than the weight of the matter contained in them was worth.

For besides what is already said to it: how is it possible for any one, who had the greatest mind in the world to contradiction, to deny it to be more eligible that such a power should be vested in the magistrate, till he knows to whom you affirm it to be more eligible? Is it more eligible to those who suffer by it, for following the light of their own reason, and the dictates of their own consciences? for these you know are gainers by it, for they know better than they did before where the truth does lie. Is it more eligible to those who have no other thoughts of religion, but to be of that of their country without any farther examination? Or is it more eligible to those who think it their duty to examine matters of religion, and to follow that which upon examination appears to them the truth? The former of these two make, I think, the greater part of mankind, though the latter be the better advised: but upon what grounds it should be more eligible to either of them, that the magistrate should, than that he should not, have a power vested in him, to use force to bring men to the true religion, when it cannot be employed but to bring men to that which he thinks the true, *i. e.* to his own religion; is not easy to guess. Or is it more eligible to the priests and ministers of national religions every where, that the magistrate should be vested with this power? who being sure to be orthodox, will have right to claim the assistance of the magistrate's power to bring those whom their arguments cannot prevail on to embrace their true religion, and to worship God in decent ways prescribed by those to whom God has left

the ordering of such matters. Or last of all, is it more eligible to all mankind? And are the magistrates of the world so careful or so lucky in the choice of their religion, that it would be an advantage to mankind, that they should have a right to do what in them lies, *i. e.* to use all the force they have, if they think convenient, to bring men to the religion they think true? When you have told us to which of these, or what other, it is more eligible; I suppose the reader will, without my contradicting it, see how little truth there is in it, or how little to your purpose.

If you will pardon me for not having contradicted that passage of yours we have been considering, I will endeavour to make you amends in what you say in reply to my answer to it, and tell you, that, notwithstanding all you say to the contrary, such a power as you would have to be vested in the magistrate, takes away the care of men's souls from themselves, and places it in the magistrate, rather than in themselves; for if when men have examined, and upon examination embrace what appears to them the true religion, the magistrate has a right to treat them as misled by prejudice, humour, or seducers; if he may use what force, and inflict what punishments, he shall think convenient till they conform to the religion the magistrate judges the true; I think you will scarce deny, but that the care of their souls is by such a power placed rather in the magistrate than in themselves, and taken as much from them as by force and authority it can be. This, whatever you pretend, is the power which your system places in the magistrate. Nor can he upon your principles exercise it otherwise, as I imagine I have showed.

You speak here, as if this power, which you would have to be vested in the magistrate, did not at all discharge, but assist the care every one has or ought to have of his own soul. I grant, were the power you would place in the magistrate such as every man has to take care of his neighbour's soul, which is to express itself only by counsel, arguments, and persuasion; it left him still the free liberty of judging for himself; and so the care of his soul remained still in his own hands.

But

But if men be perſuaded, that the wiſe and good God has veſted a power in the magiſtrate, to be ſo far judge for them, what is the true religion, as to puniſh them for rejecting the religion which the magiſtrate thinks the true, when offered with ſuch evidence as he judges ſufficient to convince them; and to puniſh them on till they conſider ſo as to embrace it; what remains, but that they render themſelves to the care and conduct of a guide that God in his goodneſs has appointed them, who having authority and commiſſion from God to be judge for them, which is the true religion, and what are arguments proper and ſufficient to convince any one of it; and he himſelf being convinced of it; why ſhould they be ſo fooliſh, as to ſuffer puniſhments in oppoſition to a power which is in the right, and they ought to ſubmit to? To what purpoſe ſhould they, under the weight of penalties, waſte time and pains in examining, ſince whatever they ſhould judge upon examination, the magiſtrate judging the arguments and reaſons he offers for the truth of his religion proper and ſufficient to convince them, they muſt ſtill lie under the puniſhment the magiſtrate ſhall think convenient till they do comply?

Beſides, when they are thus puniſhed by their magiſtrate for not conforming, what need they examine? Since you tell them, "It is not ſtrictly neceſſary to ſal-"vation, that all that are of the true religion, ſhould "underſtand the grounds of it." The magiſtrate, being of the one only true religion, knows it to be ſo; and he knows that that religion was tendered to them with ſufficient evidence, and therefore is obliged to puniſh them for rejecting it. This is that which men muſt upon your ſcheme ſuppoſe; for it is, what you yourſelf muſt ſuppoſe, before the magiſtrate can exerciſe that power you contend to be veſted in him, as is evident to any one, who will put your ſyſtem together, and particularly weigh what you ſay.

When therefore men are put into ſuch a ſtate as this, that the magiſtrate may judge what is the true religion; the magiſtrate may judge what is ſufficient evidence of its truth; the magiſtrate may be judge to whom it is

tendered with ſufficient evidence, and puniſh them that reject it ſo propoſed with ſuch penalties as he alſo ſhall judge convenient; and all this by God's appointment, and an authority received from the wiſe and benign Governor of all things; I aſk, whether the care of men's ſouls is not taken out of their own hands, and put into the magiſtrate's? Whether in ſuch a ſtate they can or will think there is any need, or that it is to any purpoſe for them to examine? And whether this be a cure for the natural averſion that is in men to conſider and weigh matters of religion; and the way to force, or ſo much as encourage them to examine?

But, ſay you, "the ſalvation of all men's ſouls is "better provided for, if, beſides the obligation that "every man has to take care of his own ſoul, the ma- "giſtrate alſo be entruſted and obliged to ſee that no "man neglect his own ſoul, than it would be if every "man were left to himſelf in that matter." Whatever ground another may have to ſay this, you can have none: You who give ſo good reaſon why conformiſts, though ever ſo ignorant and negligent in examining matters of religion, cannot yet be puniſhed to make them conſider, muſt acknowledge that "ALL men's ſal- "vation is not the better provided for by a power veſt- "ed in the magiſtrate," which cannot reach the far greateſt part of men, which are every where the conformiſts to the national religion. You that plead ſo well for the magiſtrate's not examining whether thoſe that conform, do it upon reaſon and conviction; but ſay it is ordinarily preſumable they do ſo; wherein I beſeech you do you put this care of men's ſalvation that is placed in the magiſtrate? even in bringing them to outward conformity to the national religion, and there leaving them. And are the ſouls of all mankind the better provided for, if the magiſtrates of the world are veſted with a power to uſe force to bring men to an outward profeſſion of what they think the true religion, without any other care of their ſalvation? For thither, and no farther, reaches their uſe of force in your way of applying it.

Give

Give me leave therefore to trifle with you once again, and to desire you to lay your hand upon your heart, and tell me what mankind shall gain by the change? For I hope by this time it is not so much a paradox to you, that if the magistrate be commissioned by God to take care of men's souls, in your way it takes away the care of men's souls from themselves in all those who have need of this assistance of the magistrate, *i. e.* all those who neglect to consider, and are averse to examination.

One thing more give me leave to observe to you, and that is, that taking care of men's souls, or taking care that they neglect not their souls, and laying penalties on them to bring them in outward profession to the national religion, are two very different things; though in this place and elsewhere you confound them, and would have penal laws, requiring church-conformity, pass under the name of care of men's souls; for that is the utmost your way of applying force does or can reach to; and what care is therein taken of men's souls, may be seen by the lives and knowledge observable in not a few conformists. This is not said to lay any blame on conformity, but to show how improperly you speak, when you call penal laws made to promote conformity, and force used to bring men to it, a care of men's souls; when even the exactest observers and most zealous advancers of conformity may be as irreligious, ignorant, and vicious, as any other men.

In the first treatise we heard not a syllable of any other use or end of force in matters of religion, but only to make men consider. But in your second, being forced to own bare-faced the punishing of men for their religion, you call it, "a vice to reject the true "faith, and to refuse to worship God in decent ways "prescribed by those to whom God has left the order- "ing it;" and tell us, that "it is a fault which may "justly be punished by the magistrate, not to be of the "national religion, where the true is the national reli- "gion." To make this doctrine of persecution seem limited, and go down the better, to your telling us it

muſt be only where the national religion is the true, and that the penalties muſt be moderate and convenient; both which limitations having no other judge but the magiſtrate, as I have ſhowed elſewhere, are no limitations at all; you in words add a third, that in effect ſignifies juſt as much as the other two; and that is, "If "there be ſufficient means of inſtruction provided for "all for inſtructing them in the truth of it;" of which proviſion the magiſtrate alſo being to be judge, your limitations leave him as free to puniſh all diſſenters from his own religion, as any perſecutor can wiſh: for what he will think ſufficient means of inſtruction, it will be hard for you to ſay.

In the mean time, as far as may be gathered from what you ſay in another place, we will examine what you think ſufficient proviſion for inſtructing men, which you have expreſſed in theſe words: "For if the magi- "ſtrate provides ſufficiently for the inſtruction of all "his ſubjects in the true religion, and then requires "them all under convenient penalties to hearken to "the teachers and miniſters of it, and to profeſs and "exerciſe it with one accord under their direction in "public aſſemblies."—That which ſtumbles one at the firſt view of this your method of inſtruction, is, that you leave it uncertain, whether diſſenters muſt firſt be inſtructed, and then profeſs; or elſe firſt profeſs, and then be inſtructed in the national religion. This you will do well to be a little more clear in the next time; for your mentioning no inſtruction but in public aſſemblies, and perhaps meaning it for a country where there is little other pains taken with diſſenters but the confutation and condemnation of them in aſſemblies, where they are not; they muſt ceaſe to be diſſenters before they can partake of this ſufficient means of inſtruction.

And now for thoſe who do with one accord put themſelves under the direction of the miniſters of the national, and hearken to theſe teachers of the true religion: I aſk whether one-half of thoſe whereof moſt of the aſſemblies are made up, do or can, ſo ignorant as they

they are, underſtand what they hear from the pulpit? And then whether if a man did underſtand, what in many aſſemblies ordinarily is delivered once a week there for his inſtruction, he might not yet at threeſcore years end be ignorant of the grounds and principles of the chriſtian religion? Your having ſo often in your letter mentioned ſufficient proviſion of inſtruction, has forced theſe two ſhort queſtions from me. But I forbear to tell you what I have heard very ſober people, even of the church of England, ſay upon this occaſion: For you have warned me already, that it ſhall be interpreted to be a quarrel to the clergy in general, if any thing ſhall be taken notice of in any of them worthy to be mended. I leave it to thoſe whoſe profeſſion it is to judge, whether divinity be a ſcience wherein men may be inſtructed by an harangue or two once a week, upon any ſubject at a venture, which has no coherence with that which preceded, or that which is to follow, and this made to people that are ignorant of the firſt principles of it, and are not capable of underſtanding ſuch diſcourſes. I am ſure he that ſhould think this a ſufficient means of inſtructing people in any other ſcience, would at the end of ſeven or twenty years find them very little advanced in it; and bating perhaps ſome terms and phraſes belonging to it, as far from all true and uſeful knowledge of it as when they firſt began. Whether it be ſo in matters of religion, thoſe who have the opportunity to obſerve muſt judge; and if it appear that amongſt thoſe of the national church there be very many ſo ignorant, that there is nothing more frequent than for the miniſters themſelves to complain of it; it is manifeſt from thoſe of the national church, whatever may be concluded from diſſenters, that the means of inſtruction provided by the law are not ſufficient; unleſs that be ſufficient means of inſtruction, which men of ſufficient capacity for other things, may live under many years, and yet know very little by. If you ſay it is for want of conſideration, muſt not your remedy of force be uſed to bring them to it? Or how will the magiſtrate anſwer for it, if he uſe

uſe force to make diſſenters conſider, and let thoſe of his own church periſh for want of it?

This being all one can well underſtand by your ſufficient means of inſtruction, as you there explain it, I do not ſee but men who have no averſion to be inſtructed, may yet fail of it, notwithſtanding ſuch a proviſion. Perhaps, by "exerciſing the true religion with one accord, under the direction of the miniſters of it in "public aſſemblies," you mean ſomething farther; but that not being an ordinary phraſe, will need your explication to make it underſtood.

CHAPTER II.

Of the magiſtrate's commiſſion to uſe force in matters of religion.

THOUGH in the foregoing chapter, on examining your doctrine concerning the magiſtrates who may or who may not uſe force in matters of religion, we have in ſeveral places happened to take notice of the commiſſion whereby you authorize magiſtrates to act; yet we ſhall in this chapter more particularly conſider that commiſſion. You tell us, "to uſe force in matters of religion, is a duty of the magiſtrate as old as "the law of nature, in which the magiſtrate's commiſſion lies: for the ſcripture does not properly give "it him, but ſuppoſes it." And more at large you give us an account of the magiſtrate's commiſſion in theſe words: "It is true indeed, the author and finiſher "of our faith has given the magiſtrate no new power "or commiſſion: nor was there any need that he ſhould "(if himſelf had any temporal power to give:) for he "found him already, even by the law of nature, the "miniſter of God to the people for good, and bearing "the

" the ſword not in vain, *i. e.* inveſted with coactive " power, and obliged to uſe it for all the good pur- " poſes which it might ſerve, and for which it ſhould " be found needful; even for the reſtraining of falſe " and corrupt religion: as Job long before (perhaps " before any of the ſcriptures were written) acknow- " ledged, when he ſaid, chap. xxxi. 26, 27, 28, that " the worſhipping the ſun or the moon, was an ini- " quity to be puniſhed by the judge. But though our " Saviour has given the magiſtrates no new power, yet " being king of kings, he expects and requires that " they ſhould ſubmit themſelves to his ſceptre, and uſe " the power which always belonged to them, for his " ſervice, and for the advancing his ſpiritual kingdom " in the world. And even that charity which our great " maſter ſo earneſtly recommends, and ſo ſtrictly re- " quires of all his diſciples, as it obliges all men to " ſeek and promote the good of others, as well as their " own, eſpecially their ſpiritual and eternal good, by " ſuch means as their ſeveral places and relations ena- " ble them to uſe; ſo does it eſpecially oblige the ma- " giſtrate to do it as a magiſtrate, *i. e.* by that power " which enables him to do it above the rate of other " men.

" So far therefore is the chriſtian magiſtrate, when " he gives his helping hand to the furtherance of the " goſpel, by laying convenient penalties upon ſuch as " reject it, or any part of it, from uſing any other " means for the ſalvation of men's ſouls, than what the " author and finiſher of our faith has directed, that he " does no more than his duty to God, to his Redeemer, " and to his ſubjects, requires of him.

" Chriſt, you ſay, has given no new power or com- " miſſion to the magiſtrate:" and for this you give ſe- veral reaſons. 1. " There was no need that he ſhould." Yet it ſeems ſtrange that the chriſtian magiſtrates alone ſhould have an exerciſe of coactive power in matters of religion, and yet our Saviour ſhould ſay nothing of it, but leave them to that commiſſion which was com- mon to them with all other magiſtrates. The chriſtian religion in caſes of leſs moment is not wanting in its rules;

rules; and I know not whether you will not charge the New Teſtament with a great defect, if that law alone which teaches the only true religion, that law which all magiſtrates who are of the true religion, receive and embrace, ſhould ſay nothing at all of ſo neceſſary and important a duty to thoſe who alone are in a capacity to diſcharge it, but leave them only to that general law of nature, which others who are not qualified to uſe this force have in common with them.

This at leaſt ſeems needful, if a new commiſſion does not, that the chriſtian magiſtrates ſhould have been inſtructed what degree of force they ſhould uſe, and been limited to your moderate penalties; ſince for above theſe twelve hundred years, though they have readily enough found out your commiſſion to uſe force, they never found out your moderate uſe of it, which is that alone which you aſſure us is uſeful and neceſſary.

2. You ſay, "If our Saviour had any temporal power "to give;" whereby you ſeem to give this as a reaſon why he gave not the civil magiſtrate power to uſe force in matters of religion, that he had it not to give. You tell us in the ſame paragraph, that "he is the king of "kings;" and he tells us himſelf, "That all power is "given unto him in heaven and in earth," Mat. xxviii. 18. So that he could have given what power, to whom, and to what purpoſe he had pleaſed: and concerning this there needs no if.

3. "For he found him already by the law of nature "inveſted with coactive power, and obliged to uſe it "for all the good purpoſes which it might ſerve, and "for which it ſhould be found needful." He found alſo fathers, huſbands, maſters, inveſted with their diſtinct powers by the ſame law, and under the ſame obligation; and yet he thought it needful to preſcribe to them in the uſe of thoſe powers. But there was no need he ſhould do ſo to the civil magiſtrates in the uſe of their power in matters of religion; becauſe, though fathers, huſbands, maſters, were liable to exceſs in the uſe of theirs, yet chriſtian magiſtrates were not, as appears by their having always kept to thoſe moderate meaſures,

meaſures, which you aſſure us to be the only neceſſary and uſeful.

And what at laſt is their commiſſion? "Even that of "charity, which obliges all men to ſeek and promote "the good of others, eſpecially their ſpiritual and eter- "nal good, by ſuch means as their ſeveral places and "relations enable them to uſe, eſpecially magiſtrates as "magiſtrates." This duty of charity is well diſcharged by the magiſtrate as magiſtrate, is it not? in bringing men to an outward profeſſion of any, even of the true religion, and leaving them there? But, Sir, I aſk you who muſt be judge, what is for the ſpiritual and eternal good of his ſubjects, the magiſtrate himſelf or no? If not he himſelf, who for him? Or can it be done without any one's judging at all? If he, the magiſtrate, muſt judge every where himſelf what is for the ſpiritual and eternal good of his ſubjects; as I ſee no help for it, if the magiſtrate be every where by the law of nature obliged to promote their ſpiritual and eternal good; is not the true religion like to find great advantage in the world by the uſe of force in the magiſtrate's hands? And is not this a plain demonſtration that God has by the law of nature given commiſſion to the magiſtrate to uſe force for the promoting the true religion, ſince, as it is evident, the execution of ſuch a commiſſion will do ſo much more harm than good?

To ſhow that your indirect and at a diſtance uſefulneſs, with a general neceſſity of force, authorizes the civil power in the uſe of it, you uſe the following words, "That force does ſome ſervice towards the making of "ſcholars and artiſts, I ſuppoſe you will eaſily grant. "Give me leave therefore to aſk, how it does it? I "ſuppoſe you will ſay, not by its direct and proper "efficacy, (for force is no more capable to work learn- "ing or arts, than the belief of the true religion in "men, by its direct and proper efficacy;) but by pre- "vailing upon thoſe who are deſigned for ſcholars or "artiſts to receive inſtruction, and to apply themſelves "to the uſe of thoſe means and helps which are pro- "per to make them what they are deſigned to be: that "is, it does it indirectly and at a diſtance. Well then,

if

" if all the uſefulneſs of the force towards the bringing " ſcholars or apprentices to the learning or ſkill they " are deſigned to attain, be only an indirect and at a " diſtance uſefulneſs; I pray what is it that warrants " and authorizes ſchoolmaſters, tutors or maſters, to " uſe force upon their ſcholars or apprentices, to bring " them to learning, or the ſkill of their arts and trade, " if ſuch an indirect and at a diſtance uſefulneſs of force, " together with that neceſſity of it which experience " diſcovers, will not do it? I believe you will acknow- " ledge that even ſuch an uſefulneſs, together with that " neceſſity, will ſerve the turn in theſe caſes. But then " I would fain know, why the ſame kind of uſefulneſs, " joined with the like neceſſity, will not as well do it " in the caſe before us? I confeſs I ſee no reaſon why it " ſhould not; nor do I believe you can aſſign any. You " aſk here, what authorizes ſchoolmaſters or maſters to " uſe force on their ſcholars and apprentices, if ſuch an " indirect and at a diſtance uſefulneſs, together with " neceſſity, does not do it?" I anſwer, neither your indirect and at a diſtance uſefulneſs, nor the neceſſity you ſuppoſe of it. For I do not think you will ſay, that any ſchoolmaſter has a power to teach, much leſs to uſe force on any one's child without the conſent and authority of the father: but a father, you will ſay, has a power to uſe force to correct his child to bring him to learning or ſkill in that trade he is deſigned to; and to this the father is authoriſed by the uſefulneſs and neceſſity of force. This I deny, that the mere ſuppoſed uſefulneſs and neceſſity of force authorize the father to uſe it; for then whenever he judged it uſeful and neceſſary for his ſon, to prevail with him to apply himſelf to any trade, he might uſe force upon him to that purpoſe; which I think neither you nor any body elſe will ſay, a father has a right to do on his idle and perhaps married ſon at thirty or forty years old.

There is then ſomething elſe in the caſe; and whatever it be that authorizes the father to uſe force upon his child, to make him a proficient in it, authorizes him alſo to chooſe that trade, art, or ſcience he would have him a proficient in: for the father can no longer

uſe

uſe force upon his ſon, to make him attain any art or trade, than he can preſcribe to him the art or trade he is to attain. Put your parallel now if you pleaſe: The father by the uſefulneſs and neceſſity of force is authorized to uſe it upon his child, to make him attain any art or ſcience; therefore the magiſtrate is authorized to uſe force to bring men to the true religion, becauſe it is uſeful and neceſſary. Thus far you have uſed it, and you think it does well. But let us go on with the parallel: this uſefulneſs and neceſſity of force authorizes the father to uſe it, to make his ſon apply himſelf to the uſe of the means and helps which are proper to make him what he is deſigned to be, no longer than it authorizes the father to deſign what his ſon ſhall be, and to chooſe for him the art or trade he ſhall be of: and ſo the uſefulneſs and neceſſity you ſuppoſe in force to bring men to any church, cannot authorize the magiſtrate to uſe force any farther, than he has a right to chooſe for any one what church or religion he ſhall be of. So that if you will ſtick to this argument, and allow the parallel between a magiſtrate and a father, and the right they have to uſe force for the inſtructing of their ſubjects in religion, and children in arts, you muſt either allow the magiſtrate to have power to chooſe what religion his ſubjects ſhall be of, which you have denied, or elſe that he has no power to uſe force to make them uſe means to be of it.

A father being intruſted with the care and proviſion for his child, is as well bound in duty, as fitted by natural love and tenderneſs, to ſupply the defects of his tender age. When it is born, the child cannot move itſelf for the eaſe and help of natural neceſſities, the parents hands muſt ſupply that inability, and feed, cleanſe, and ſwaddle it. Age having given more ſtrength, and the exerciſe of the limbs, the parents are diſcharged from the trouble of putting meat into the mouth of the child, clothing or unclothing, or carrying him in their arms. The ſame duty and affection which required ſuch kind of helps to the infant, makes them extend their thoughts to other cares for him when he is grown a little bigger; it is not only a preſent ſupport, but a future

future comfortable ſubſiſtence begins to be thought on: to this ſome art or ſcience is neceſſary, but the child's ignorance and want of proſpect makes him unable to chooſe. And hence the father has a power to chooſe for him, that the flexible and docile part of life may not be ſquandered away, and the time of inſtruction and improvement be loſt for want of direction. The trade or art being choſen by the father, it is the exerciſe and induſtry of the child muſt acquire it to himſelf: but induſtry uſually wanting in children the ſpur which reaſon and foreſight gives to the endeavours of grown men; the father's rod and correction is fain to ſupply that want, to make him apply himſelf to the uſe of thoſe means and helps which are proper to make him what he is deſigned to be. But when the child is once come to the ſtate of manhood, and to be the poſſeſſor and free diſpoſer of his goods and eſtate, he is then diſcharged from this diſcipline of his parents, and they have no longer any right to chooſe any art, ſcience, or courſe of life for him, or by force to make him apply himſelf to the uſe of thoſe means which are proper to make him be what he deſigns to be. Thus the want of knowledge to chooſe a fit calling, and want of knowledge of the neceſſity of pains and induſtry to attain ſkill in it, puts a power into the parents hands to uſe force where it is neceſſary to procure the application and diligence of their children in that, which their parents have thought fit to ſet them to: but it gives this power to the parents only, and to no other, whilſt they live; and if they die whilſt their children need it, to their ſubſtitutes; and there it is ſafely placed: for ſince their want of knowledge, during their nonage, makes them want direction; and want of reaſon often makes them need puniſhment and force to excite their endeavours, and keep them intent to the uſe of thoſe means that lead to the end they are directed to; the tenderneſs and love of parents will engage them to uſe it only for their good, and generally to quit it too, when by the title of manhood they come to be above the direction and diſcipline of children. But how does this prove that the magiſtrate has any right to force men to apply themſelves to the

the uſe of thoſe means and helps which are proper to make them of any religion, more than it proves that the magiſtrate has a right to chooſe for them what religion they ſhall be of?

To your queſtion therefore, "what is it that warrants and authorizes ſchoolmaſters, tutors, and maſters to uſe force upon their ſcholars or apprentices?" I anſwer, a commiſſion from the father or mother, or thoſe who ſupply their places; for without that no indirect or at a diſtance uſefulneſs, or ſuppoſed neceſſity, could authorize them.

But then you will aſk, Is it not this uſefulneſs and neceſſity that gives this power to the father and mother? I grant it. "I would fain know then, ſay you, why "the ſame uſefulneſs joined with the like neceſſity, "will not as well do in the caſe before us?" And I, ſir, will as readily tell you: becauſe the underſtanding of the parents is to ſupply the want of it in the minority of their children; and therefore they have a right not only to uſe force to make their children apply themſelves to the means of acquiring any art or trade, but to chooſe alſo the trade or calling they ſhall be of. But when being come out of the ſtate of minority, they are ſuppoſed of years of diſcretion to chooſe what they will deſign themſelves to be, they are alſo at liberty to judge what application and induſtry they will uſe for the attaining of it; and then how negligent ſoever they are in the uſe of the means, how averſe ſoever to inſtruction or application, they are paſt the correction of a ſchoolmaſter, and their parents can no longer chooſe or deſign for them what they ſhall be, nor "uſe force to "prevail with them to apply themſelves to the uſe of "thoſe means and helps which are proper to make them "what they are deſigned to be." He that imagines a father or tutor may ſend his ſon to ſchool at thirty or forty years old, and order him to be whipped there, or that any indirect and at a diſtance uſefulneſs will authorize him to be ſo uſed, will be thought fitter to be ſent thither himſelf, and there to receive due correction.

When you have conſidered, it is otherwiſe in the caſe of the magiſtrate uſing force your way in matters of re-

ligion; that there his underſtanding is not to ſupply the defect of underſtanding in his ſubjects, and that only for a time; that he cannot chooſe for any of his ſubjects what religion he ſhall be of, as you yourſelf confeſs; and that this power of the magiſtrate, if it be, as is claimed by you, over men of all ages, parts and endowments; you will perhaps "ſee ſome reaſon why it "ſhould not do in the caſe before us, as well as in that "of ſchoolmaſters and tutors, though you believe I "cannot aſſign any." But, ſir, will your indirect and at a diſtance uſefulneſs, together with your ſuppoſed neceſſity, authorize the maſter of the ſhoe-makers company to take any one who comes in his hands, and puniſh him for not being of the ſhoe-makers company, and not coming to their guild, when he, who has a right to chooſe of what trade and company he will be, thinks it not his intereſt to be a ſhoe-maker? Nor can he or any body elſe imagine that this force, this puniſhment, is uſed to make him a good ſhoe-maker, when it is ſeen and avowed that the puniſhments ceaſe, and they are free from it who enter themſelves of the company, whether they are really ſhoe-makers, or in earneſt apply themſelves to be ſo or no. How much it differs from this, that the magiſtrate ſhould puniſh men for not being of his church, who chooſe not to be of it, and when they are once entered into the communion of it, are puniſhed no more, though they are as ignorant, unſkilful, and unpractiſed in the religion of it as before: how much, I ſay, this differs from the caſe I propoſed, I leave you to conſider. For after all your pretences of uſing force for the ſalvation of ſouls, and conſequently to make men really chriſtians, you are fain to allow, and you give reaſons for it, that force is uſed only to thoſe who are out of your church: but whoever are once in it, are free from force, whether they be really chriſtians, and apply themſelves to thoſe things which are for the ſalvation of their ſouls, or no.

As to what you ſay, that whether they chooſe it or no, they ought to chooſe it; for your magiſtrate's religion is the true religion, that is the queſtion between you and them: but be that as it will, if force be to be

uſed

uſed in the caſe, I have proved that be the magiſtrate's religion true or falſe, he, whilſt he believes it to be true, is under an obligation to uſe force, as if it were true.

But ſince you think your inſtance of children ſo weighty and preſſing, give me leave to return you your queſtion; I aſk you then, are not parents as much authorized to teach their children their religion, as they are to teach them their trade, when they have deſigned them to it? May they not as lawfully correct them to make them learn their catechiſm, or the principles of their religion, as they may to make them learn Clenard's grammar? Or may they not uſe force to make them go to maſs, or whatever they believe to be the worſhip of the true religion, as to go to ſchool, or to learn any art or trade? If they may, as I think you will not deny, unleſs you will ſay, that none but orthodox parents may teach their children any religion: if they may, I ſay then, pray tell me a reaſon, if your arguments from the diſcipline of children be good, why the magiſtrate may not uſe force to bring men to his religion, as well as parents may uſe force to inſtruct children, and bring them up in theirs? When you have conſidered this, you will perhaps find ſome difference between the ſtate of children and grown men, betwixt thoſe under tutelage, and thoſe who are free and at their own diſpoſal; and be inclined to think that thoſe reaſons which ſubject children in their non-age to the uſe of force, may not, nor do concern men at years of diſcretion.

You tell us farther, "that commonwealths are inſti-
"tuted for the attaining of all the benefits which po-
"litical government can yield: and therefore if the ſpi-
"ritual and eternal intereſts of men may any way be
"procured or advanced by political government, the
"procuring and advancing thoſe intereſts muſt in all
"reaſon be received amongſt the ends of civil ſociety,
"and ſo conſequently fall within the compaſs of the
"magiſtrate's juriſdiction." Concerning the extent of the magiſtrate's juriſdiction, and the ends of civil ſociety, whether the author or you have begged the queſtion, which is the chief buſineſs of your 56th and two or three following pages, I ſhall leave it to the readers

to judge, and bring the matter, if you pleaſe, to a ſhorter iſſue. The queſtion is, whether the magiſtrate has any power to interpoſe force in matters of religion, or for the ſalvation of ſouls? The argument againſt it is, that civil ſocieties are not conſtituted for that end, and the magiſtrate cannot uſe force for ends for which the commonwealth was not conſtituted.

The end of a commonwealth conſtituted can be ſuppoſed no other, than what men in the conſtitution of, and entering into it, propoſed; and that could be nothing but protection from ſuch injuries from other men, which they deſiring to avoid, nothing but force could prevent or remedy; all things but this being as well attainable by men living in neighbourhood without the bounds of a commonwealth, they could propoſe to themſelves no other thing but this in quitting their natural liberty, and putting themſelves under the umpirage of a civil ſovereign, who therefore had the force of all the members of the commonwealth put into his hands, to make his decrees to this end be obeyed. Now ſince no man, or ſociety of men, can by their opinions in religion, or ways of worſhip, do any man who differed from them any injury, which he could not avoid or redreſs, if he deſired it, without the help of force; the puniſhing any opinion in religion, or ways of worſhip by the force given the magiſtrate, could not be intended by thoſe who conſtituted or entered into the commonwealth; and ſo could be no end of it, but quite the contrary. For force from a ſtronger hand to bring a man to a religion, which another thinks the true, being an injury which in the ſtate of nature every one would avoid; protection from ſuch injury is one of the ends of a commonwealth, and ſo every man has a right to toleration.

If you will ſay, that commonwealths, are not voluntary ſocieties conſtituted by men, and by men freely entered into; I ſhall deſire you to prove it.

In the mean time allowing it you for good, that commonwealths are conſtituted by God for ends which he has appointed, without the conſent and contrivance of men: If you ſay, that one of thoſe ends is the pro-

pagation of the true religion, and the ſalvation of men's ſouls; I ſhall deſire you to ſhow me any ſuch end expreſsly appointed by God in revelation; which ſince, as you confeſs, you cannot do, you have recourſe to the general law of nature; and what is that? The law of reaſon, whereby every one is commiſſioned to do good. And the propagating the true religion for the ſalvation of men's ſouls being doing good, you ſay, the civil ſovereigns are commiſſioned and required by that law to uſe their force for thoſe ends. But ſince by this law all civil ſovereigns are commiſſioned and obliged alike to uſe their coactive power for the propagating the true religion, and the ſalvation of ſouls; and it is not poſſible for them to execute ſuch a commiſſion, or obey that law, but by uſing force to bring men to that religion which they judge the true; by which uſe of force, much more harm than good would be done towards the propagating the true religion in the world, as I have ſhowed elſewhere: therefore no ſuch commiſſion, whoſe execution would do more harm than good, more hinder than promote the end for which it is ſuppoſed given; can be a commiſſion from God by the law of nature. And this I ſuppoſe may ſatisfy you about the end of civil ſocieties or commonwealths, and anſwer what you ſay concerning the ends attainable by them.

But that you may not think the great poſition of yours, which is ſo often uſhered in with doubtleſs; for which you imagine you have ſufficient warrant in a miſapplied ſchool-maxim, is paſt over too ſlightly; and is not ſufficiently anſwered; I ſhall give you that farther ſatisfaction.

You ſay, "civil ſocieties are inſtituted for the attaining all the benefits which civil ſociety or politi- "cal government can yield;" and the reaſon you give for it, "becauſe it has hitherto been univerſally ac- "knowledged that no power is given in vain:" and therefore "if I except any of thoſe benefits, I ſhall be "obliged to admit that the power of attaining them "was given in vain." And if I do admit it, no harm will follow in human affairs: or if I may borrow an elegant expreſſion of yours out of the foregoing leaf, "the

" fortune of Europe does not turn upon it." In the voluntary inſtitution, and beſtowing of power, there is no abſurdity or inconvenience at all, that power, ſufficient for ſeveral ends, ſhould be limited by thoſe that give the power only to one or ſome part of them. The power which a general commanding a potent army has, may be enough to take more towns than one from the enemy; or to ſuppreſs a domeſtic ſedition; and yet the power of attaining thoſe benefits, which is in his hand, will not authorize him to employ the force of the army therein, if he be commiſſioned only to beſiege and take one certain place. So it is in a commonwealth. The power that is in the civil ſovereign is the force of all the ſubjects of the commonwealth, which ſuppoſing it ſufficient for other ends, than the preſerving the members of the commonwealth in peace from injury and violence: yet if thoſe who gave him that power, limited the application of it to that ſole end, no opinion of any other benefits attainable by it can authorize him to uſe it otherwiſe.

Our Saviour tells us expreſly, that " all power was " given him in heaven and earth," Matt. xxviii. 11. By which power I imagine you will not ſay, that the " ſpiritual and eternal intereſt" of thoſe men whom you think need the help of political force, and of all other men too, could not any way be procured or advanced; and yet if you will hear him in another place, you will find this power, which being all power, could certainly have wrought on all men, limited to a certain number: he ſays, " thou haſt given him, [i. e. thy ſon] power " over all fleſh, that he ſhould give eternal life to as " many as thou haſt given him," John xvii. 2. Whether your univerſally acknowledged maxim of logic be true enough to authorize you to ſay, that any part of this power was given him in vain, and to enable you to draw conſequences from it, you were beſt ſee.

But were your maxim ſo true that it proved, that ſince it might " indirectly and at a diſtance" do ſome ſervice towards the " procuring or advancing the ſpiri- " tual intereſt" of ſome few ſubjects of a commonwealth, therefore force was to be employed to that end; yet

th

that will ſcarce make good this doctrine of yours: "doubtleſs, commonwealths are inſtituted for the attaining all thoſe benefits which political government "can yield; therefore if the ſpiritual and eternal intereſts of men may any way be procured or advanced by "political government, the procuring and advancing "thoſe intereſts muſt in all reaſon be reckoned among "the ends of civil ſocieties, and ſo conſequently fall "within the compaſs of the magiſtrate's juriſdiction." For granting it true that "commonwealths are inſtituted for the attaining all thoſe benefits which political government can yield," it does not follow "that "the procuring and advancing the ſpiritual and eternal intereſt" of ſome few members of the commonwealth by an application of power, which indirectly and at a diſtance, or by accident, may do ſome ſervice that way, whilſt at the ſame time it prejudices a far greater number in their civil intereſts; can with reaſon be reckoned among the ends of civil ſociety.

"That commonwealths are inſtituted for thoſe ends, "viz. for the procuring, preſerving, and advancing "men's civil intereſts, you ſay, No man will deny." To ſacrifice therefore theſe civil intereſts of a great number of people, which are the allowed ends of the commonwealths, to the uncertain expectation of ſome ſervice to be done indirectly and at a diſtance to a far leſs number, as experience has always ſhowed thoſe really converted to the true religion by force to be, if any at all; cannot be one of the ends of the commonwealth. Though the advancing of the ſpiritual and eternal intereſt be of infinite advantage to the perſons who receive that benefit, yet if it can be thought a benefit to the commonwealth when it is procured them with the diminiſhing or deſtroying the civil intereſts of great numbers of their fellow-citizens; then the ravaging of an enemy, the plague, or a famine, may be ſaid to bring a benefit to the commonwealth: for either of theſe may indirectly and at a diſtance do ſome ſervice towards the advancing or procuring the ſpiritual and eternal intereſt of ſome of thoſe who ſuffer in it.

In the two latter paragraphs you except againſt my want of exactneſs, in ſetting down your opinion I am arguing againſt. Had it been any way to take off the force of what you ſay, or that the reader could have been miſled by my words in any part of the queſtion I was arguing againſt, you had had reaſon to complain: if not, you had done better to have entertained the reader with a clearer anſwer to my argument, than ſpent your ink and his time needleſsly, to ſhow ſuch niceneſs.

My argument is as good againſt your tenet in your own words, as in mine which you except againſt: your words are, " doubtleſs commonwealths are inſtituted " for the attaining all the benefits which political go- " vernment can yield; and therefore if the ſpiritual and " eternal intereſt of men may any way be procured or " advanced by political government, the procuring and " advancing thoſe intereſts muſt in all reaſon be reck- " oned amongſt the ends of civil ſocieties."

To which I anſwered, that if this be ſo, " Then this " poſition muſt be true, viz. That all ſocieties whatſo- " ever are inſtituted for the attaining all the benefits " that they may any way yield; there being nothing " peculiar to civil ſociety in the caſe, why that ſociety " ſhould be inſtituted for the attaining all the benefits " it can any way yield, and other ſocieties not. By " which argument it will follow, that all ſocieties are " inſtituted for one and the ſame end, i. e. for the at- " taining all the benefits that they can any way yield. " By which account there will be no difference between " church and ſtate, a commonwealth and an army, or " between a family and the Eaſt-India company; all " which have hitherto been thought diſtinct ſorts of " ſocieties, inſtituted for different ends. If your hy- " potheſis hold good, one of the ends of the family " muſt be to preach the goſpel, and adminiſter the ſa- " craments; and one buſineſs of an army to teach lan- " guages, and propagate religion; becauſe theſe are " benefits ſome way or other attainable by thoſe ſocie- " ties: unleſs you take want of commiſſion and autho-

" rity

" rity to be a ſufficient impediment: and that will be " ſo in other caſes." To which you reply, " Nor will " it follow from hence, that all ſocieties are inſtituted " for one and the ſame end, (as you imagine it will) " unleſs you ſuppoſe all ſocieties enabled by the power " they are endued with to attain the ſame end, which I " believe no man hitherto did ever affirm. And there- " fore, notwithſtanding this poſition, there may be ſtill " as great a difference as you pleaſe between church " and ſtate, a commonwealth and an army, or between " a family and the Eaſt-India company. Which ſe- " veral ſocieties, as they are inſtituted for different " ends, ſo are they likewiſe furniſhed with different " powers proportionate to their reſpective ends." In which the reaſon you give to deſtroy my inference, I am to thank you for, if you underſtood the force of it, it being the very ſame I bring to ſhow that my inference from your way of arguing is good. I ſay, that from your way of reaſoning about the ends of government, " It would follow that all ſocieties were inſtituted for " one and the ſame end; unleſs you take want of com- " miſſion and authority to be a ſufficient impediment." And you tell me here it will not follow, " unleſs I ſup- " poſe all ſocieties enabled by the power they are en- " dued with, to attain the ſame end;" which in other words is, unleſs I ſuppoſe all who have in their hands the force of any ſociety to have all of them the ſame commiſſion.

The natural force of all the members of any ſociety, or of thoſe who by the ſociety can be procured to aſſiſt it, is in one ſenſe called the power of that ſociety. This power or force is generally put into ſome one or few perſons hands with direction and authority how to uſe it; and this in another ſenſe is called alſo the power of the ſociety: and this is the power you here ſpeak of, and in theſe following words, viz. " Several ſocieties, " as they are inſtituted for different ends; ſo likewiſe " are they furniſhed with different powers proporti- " onate to their reſpective ends." The power therefore of any ſociety in this ſenſe, is nothing but the autho- rity and direction given to thoſe that have the manage- ment

ment of the force or natural power of the ſociety, how and to what ends to uſe it, by which commiſſion the ends of ſocieties are known and diſtinguiſhed. So that all ſocieties wherein thoſe who are intruſted with the management of the force or natural power of the ſociety, have commiſſion and authority to uſe the force or natural power of the ſociety to attain the ſame benefits, are inſtituted for the ſame end. And therefore, if in all ſocieties thoſe who have the management of the force or natural power of the ſociety, are commiſſioned or authorized to uſe that force to attain all the benefits attainable by it, all ſocieties are inſtituted to the ſame end: and ſo what I ſaid will ſtill be true, viz. "That a "family and an army, a commonwealth and a church, "have all the ſame end. And if your hypotheſis hold "good, one of the ends of a family muſt be to preach "the goſpel, and adminiſter the ſacraments; and one "buſineſs of an army to teach languages, and propa- "gate religion, becauſe theſe are benefits ſome way or "other attainable by thoſe ſocieties; unleſs you take "want of commiſſion and authority to be a ſufficient "impediment: and that will be ſo too in other caſes." To which you have ſaid nothing but what does confirm it, which you will a little better ſee, when you have conſidered that any benefit attainable by force or natural power of a ſociety, does not prove the ſociety to be inſtituted for that end; till you alſo ſhow, that thoſe to whom the management of the force of the ſociety is intruſted, are commiſſioned to uſe it to that end.

And therefore to your next paragraph I ſhall think it anſwer enough to print here, ſide by ſide with it, that paragraph of mine to which you intended it as an anſwer.

L. II. p. 389. "It is a benefit "to have true knowledge and phi- "loſophy embraced and aſſented "to, in any civil ſociety or go- "vernment. But will you ſay, "therefore, that it is a benefit to "the

L. III. p. 58. To your next paragraph, after what has already been ſaid, I think it may ſuffice to ſay as follows.

" the ſociety, or one of the ends " of government, that all who are " not peripatetics ſhould be pu- " niſhed, to make men find out " the truth, and profeſs it? This " indeed might be thought a fit " way to make ſome men embrace " the peripatetic philoſophy, but " not a proper way to find the " truth. For perhaps the peripa- " tetic philoſophy may not be " true; perhaps a great many have " not time, nor parts to ſtudy it; " perhaps a great many who have " ſtudied it, cannot be convinced " of the truth of it: and therefore " it cannot be a benefit to the " commonwealth, nor one of the " ends of it, that theſe members " of the ſociety ſhould be diſturb- " ed, and diſeaſed to no purpoſe, " when they are guilty of no fault. " For juſt the ſame reaſon, it can- " not be a benefit to civil ſociety, " that men ſhould be puniſhed in " Denmark for not being luthe- " rans, in Geneva for not being " calviniſts, and in Vienna for not " being papiſts, as a means to " make them find out the true " religion. For ſo, upon your " grounds, men muſt be treated " in thoſe places, as well as in " England, for not being of the " church of England. And then, " I beſeech you, conſider the great " benefit will accrue to men in " ſociety by this method; and I " ſuppoſe it will be a hard thing " for you to prove, That ever civil " governments were inſtituted to " puniſh lows. Though perhaps the peripatetic philoſophy may not be true, (and perhaps it is no great matter, if it be not) yet the true religion is undoubtedly true. And though perhaps a great many have not time, nor parts to ſtudy that philoſophy, (and perhaps it may be no great matter neither, if they have not) yet all that have the true religion duly tendered them, have time, and all, but idiots and madmen, have parts likewiſe to ſtudy it, as much as it is neceſſary for them to ſtudy it. And though perhaps a great many who have ſtudied that philoſophy cannot be convinced of the truth of it, (which perhaps is no great wonder) yet no man ever ſtudied the true religion with ſuch care and diligence as he might and ought to uſe, and with an honeſt mind, but he was convinced of the truth of it. And that thoſe

" puniſh men for not being of this " or that ſect in religion; how- " ever by accident, indirectly and " at a diſtance, it may be an oc- " caſion to one perhaps of a thou- " ſand, or an hundred, to ſtudy " that controverſy, which is all " you expect from it. If it be a " benefit, pray tell me what be- " nefit it is. A civil benefit it " cannot be. For men's civil in- " tereſts are diſturbed, injured, " and impaired by it. And what " ſpiritual benefit that can be to " any multitude of men to be pu- " niſhed for diſſenting from a falſe " or erroneous profeſſion, I would " have you find out; unleſs it be " a ſpiritual benefit to be in dan- " ger to be driven into a wrong " way. For if in all differing ſects " one is in the wrong, it is a hun- " dred to one but that from which " any one diſſents, and is puniſh- " ed for diſſenting from, is the " wrong."

thoſe who cannot otherwiſe be brought to do this, ſhall be a little diſturbed and diſeaſed to bring them to it, I take to be the intereſt, not only of thoſe particular perſons who by this means may be brought into the way of ſalvation, but of the commonwealth likewiſe, upon theſe two accounts.

1. Becauſe the true religion, which this method propagates, makes good men; and good men are always the beſt ſubjects, or members of the commonwealth; not only as they do more ſincerely and zealouſly promote the public good than other men; but likewiſe in regard of the favour of God, which they often procure to the ſocieties of which they are members. And,

2. Becauſe this care in any commonwealth, of God's honour and men's ſalvation, entitles it to his ſpecial protection and bleſſing. So that where this method is uſed, it proves both a ſpiritual and a civil benefit to the commonwealth.

You tell us, " the true religion is undoubtedly true." If you had told us too, who is undoubtedly judge of it, you had put all paſt doubt: but till you will be pleaſed to determine that, it would be undoubtedly true, that the king of Denmark is as undoubtedly judge of it at Copen-

Copenhagen, and the emperor at Vienna, as the king of England in this iſland: I do not ſay they judge as right, but they are by as much right judges, and therefore have as much right to puniſh thoſe who diſſent from lutheraniſm and popery in thoſe countries, as any other civil magiſtrate has to puniſh any diſſenters from the national religion any-where elſe. And who can deny but theſe briars and thorns laid in their way by the penal laws of thoſe countries, may do ſome ſervice indirectly and at a diſtance, to bring men there ſeverely and impartially to examine matters of religion, and ſo to embrace the truth that muſt ſave them, which the bare outward profeſſion of any religion in the world will not do?

" This true religion, which is undoubtedly true, you " tell us too, never any body ſtudied with ſuch care " and diligence as he might and ought to uſe, and " with an honeſt mind, but he was convinced of the " truth of it."

If you will reſolve it in your ſhort circular way, and tell me ſuch diligence as one ought to uſe, is ſuch diligence as brings one to be convinced, it is a queſtion too eaſy to be aſked. If I ſhould deſire to know plainly what is to be underſtood by it, it would be a queſtion too hard for you to anſwer, and therefore I ſhall not trouble you with demanding what this diligence which a man may and ought to uſe, is; nor what you mean by an honeſt mind. I only aſk you, whether force, your way applied, be able to produce them? that ſo the commonwealth may have the benefits you propoſe from men's being convinced of, and conſequently embracing, the true religion, which you ſay nobody can miſs, who is brought to that diligence, and that honeſt mind.

The benefits to the commonwealth are, 1. " That " the true religion that this method propagates, makes " good men, and good men are always the beſt ſubjects, " and often procure the favour of God to the ſociety " they are members of." Being forward enough to grant that nothing contributes ſo much to the benefit of

of a ſociety, as that it be made up of good men, I began preſently to give into your method, which promiſes ſo ſure a way to make men ſo ſtudy the true religion, that they cannot miſs the being convinced of the truth of it, and ſo hardly avoid being really of the true religion, and conſequently good men. But, that I might not miſtake in a thing of that conſequence, I began to look about in thoſe countries where force has been made uſe of to propagate what you allowed to be the true religion, and found complaints of as great a ſcarcity of good men there, as in other places. A friend whom I diſcourſed on this point, ſaid, It might poſſibly be that the world had not yet had the benefit of your method: becauſe law-makers had not yet been able to find that juſt temper of penalties on which your propagation of the true religion was built; and that therefore it was great pity you had not yet diſcovered this great ſecret, but it was to be hoped you would. Another, who ſtood by, ſaid he did not ſee how your method could make men it wrought on, and brought to conformity, better than others, unleſs corrupt nature with impunity were like to produce better men in one outward profeſſion than in another. To which I replied, That we did not look on conformiſts through a due medium; for if we did, with you, allow it preſumable that all who conformed did it upon conviction, there could be no juſt complaint of the ſcarcity of good men: and ſo we got over that difficulty.

The ſecond benefit you ſay your uſe of force brings to the commonwealth, is, "That this care in any commonwealth, of God's honour and men's ſalvation, "entitles it to his ſpecial protection and bleſſing."—Then certainly all commonwealths, that have any regard to the protection and bleſſing of God, will not neglect to entitle themſelves to it, by uſing of force to promote that religion they believe to be true. But I beſeech you what care is this of the honour of God and men's ſalvation you ſpeak of? Is it, as you have owned it, a care by penalties to make men outwardly conform, and without any farther care or inquiry to preſume that they

they do it upon conviction, and with a ſincere embracing of, and obedience to the truth? But if the honour of God, and men's ſalvation, conſiſts not in an outward conformity to any religion, but in ſomething farther; what bleſſing they may expect whoſe care goes ſo far, and then preſume the reſt, which is the hardeſt part, and therefore leaſt to be preſumed, the prophet Jeremiah, chap. xlviii. 10, will tell you, who ſays, "Curſed "be he that does the work of the Lord negligent-"ly:" which thoſe who think it is the magiſtrate's buſineſs to uſe force to bring men heartily to embrace the truth that muſt ſave them, were beſt ſeriouſly to conſider.

Your next paragraph containing nothing but poſitions of yours, which you ſuppoſe elſewhere proved, and I elſewhere examined, it is not fit the reader ſhould be troubled any farther about them.

I once knew a gentleman, who having cracked himſelf with an ungovernable ambition, could never afterwards hear the place he aimed at mentioned without ſhowing marks of his diſtemper. I know not what the matter is, that when there comes in your way but the mention of ſecular power in your or eccleſiaſtics hands, you cannot contain yourſelf: we have inſtances of it in other parts of your letter; and here again you fall into a fit, which ſince it produces rather marks of your breeding, than arguments for your cauſe, I ſhall leave them as they are to the reader, if you can make them go down with him for reaſons from a grave man, or for a ſober anſwer to what I ſay in that and the following paragraph.

Much-what of the ſame ſize is your ingenious reply to what I ſay in the next paragraph, *viz.* "That com-"monwealths, or civil ſocieties and governments, if "you will believe the judicious Mr. Hooker, are, as "St. Peter calls them, 1 Pet. ii. 13, ἀνθρωπίνη κτίσις, the "contrivance and inſtitution of man." To which you ſmartly reply, for your choler was up, "it is well for "St. Peter that he had the judicious Mr. Hooker on "his ſide." And it would have been well for you too to have ſeen that Mr. Hooker's authority was made uſe

of

of not to confirm the authority of St. Peter, but to confirm that ſenſe I gave of St. Peter's words, which is not ſo clear in our tranſlation, but that there are thoſe who, as I doubt not but you know, do not allow of it. But this being ſaid when paſſion it ſeems rather employed your wit than your judgment, though nothing to the purpoſe, may yet perhaps indirectly and at a diſtance do ſome ſervice.

And now, Sir, if you can but imagine that men in the corrupt ſtate of nature might be authorized and required by reaſon, the law of nature, to avoid the inconveniencies of that ſtate, and to that purpoſe to put the power of governing them into ſome one or more men's hands, in ſuch forms, and under ſuch agreements as they ſhould think fit; (which governors ſo ſet over them for a good end by their own choice, though they received all their power from thoſe, who by the law of nature had a power to confer it on them, may very fitly be called powers ordained of God, being choſen and appointed by thoſe who had authority from God ſo to do: for he that receives commiſſion, limited according to the diſcretion of him that gives it, from another who had authority from his prince ſo to do, may truly be ſaid, ſo far as his commiſſion reaches, to be appointed or ordained by the prince himſelf;) it may ſerve as an anſwer to your two next paragraphs, and to ſhow that there is no oppoſition or difficulty in all that St. Peter, St. Paul, or the judicious Mr. Hooker ſays; nor any thing, in what either of them ſays, to your purpoſe. And though it be true, thoſe powers that are, are ordained of God; yet it may nevertheleſs be true, that the power any one has, and the ends for which he has it, may be by the contrivance and appointment of men.

To my ſaying, "the ends of commonwealths appointed by the inſtitutors of them, could not be their "ſpiritual and eternal intereſt, becauſe they could not "ſtipulate about thoſe one with another, nor ſubmit "this intereſt to the power of the ſociety, or any ſo"vereign they ſhould ſet over them." You reply, "very true, Sir; but they can ſubmit to be puniſhed in their

" their temporal intereſt, if they deſpiſe or neglect " thoſe greater intereſts." How they can ſubmit to be puniſhed by any men in their temporal intereſt, for that which they cannot ſubmit to be judged by any man, when you can ſhow, I ſhall admire your politics. Beſides, if the compact about matters of religion be, that thoſe ſhould be puniſhed in their temporal, who neglect or deſpiſe their eternal intereſt; who I beſeech you is by this agreement rather to be puniſhed, a ſober diſſenter, who appears concerned for religion and his ſalvation, or an irreligious profane or debauched conformiſt? By ſuch as deſpiſe or neglect thoſe greater intereſts, you here mean only diſſenters from the national religion: for thoſe only you puniſh, though you repreſent them under ſuch a deſcription as belongs not peculiarly to them; but that matters not, ſo long as it beſt ſuits your occaſion.

In your next paragraph you wonder at my news from the Weſt-Indies; I ſuppoſe becauſe you found it not in your books of Europe or Aſia. But whatever you may think, I aſſure you all the world is not Mile-end. But that you may be no more ſurprized with news, let me aſk you, whether it be not poſſible that men, to whom the rivers and woods afforded the ſpontaneous proviſions of life, and ſo with no private poſſeſſions of land had no enlarged deſires after riches or power; ſhould live together in ſociety, make one people of one language under one chieftain, who ſhall have no other power but to command them in time of common war againſt their common enemies, without any municipal laws, judges, or any perſon with ſuperiority eſtabliſhed amongſt them, but ended all their private differences, if any aroſe, by the extemporary determination of their neighbours, or of arbitrators choſen by the parties: I aſk you, whether in ſuch a commonwealth the chieftain who was the only man of authority amongſt them, had any power to uſe the force of the commonwealth to any other end but the defence of it againſt an enemy, though other benefits were attainable by it?

The paragraph of mine to which you mean your next for an anſwer, ſhall anſwer for itſelf.

L. II. p. 392. " You quote the " author's argument, which he " brings to prove that the care of " ſouls is not committed to the " magiſtrate, in theſe words: It " is not committed to him by " God, becauſe it appears not that " God has ever given any ſuch au- " thority to one man over an- " other, as to compel any one to " his religion. This, when firſt " I read it, I confeſs I thought a " good argument. But you ſay, " this is quite beſide the buſineſs; " and the reaſon you give, is, for " the authority of the magiſtrate " is not authority to compel any " one to his religion, but only an " authority to procure all his ſub- " jects the means of diſcovering " the way of ſalvation, and to pro- " cure withal, as much as in him " lies, that none remain ignorant " of it, &c. I fear, Sir, you for- " get yourſelf. The author was " not writing againſt your new " hypotheſis, before it was known " in the world. He may be ex- " cuſed, if he had not the gift of " prophecy, to argue againſt a " notion which was not yet ſtart- " ed. He had in view only the " laws hitherto made, and the puniſhments, in matters " of religion, in uſe in the world. The penalties, as I " take it, are laid on men for being of different ways " of religion: which, what is it other but to compel " them to relinquiſh their own, and to conform them- " ſelves

L. III. p. 63. As to your next paragraph, I think I might now wholly paſs it over. I ſhall only tell you, that as I have often heard, ſo I hope I ſhall always hear of " reli- " gion eſtabliſhed " by law." For though the magiſtrate's authority can " add no force or " ſanction to any " religion, whether " true or falſe, nor " any thing to the " truth or validity " of his own, or any " religion whatſo- " ever;" yet I think it may do much toward the upholding and preſerving the true religion within his juriſdiction; and in that reſpect may properly enough be ſaid to eſtabliſh it.

" ſelves to that from which they differ? If this be not
" to compel them to the magiſtrate's religion, pray tell
" us what is? This muſt be neceſſarily ſo underſtood;
" unleſs it can be ſuppoſed that the law intends not to
" have that done, which with penalties it commands
" to be done; or that puniſhments are not compulſion,
" not that compulſion the author complains of. The
" law ſays, Do this, and live; embrace this doctrine,
" conform to this way of worſhip, and be at eaſe and
" free; or elſe be fined, impriſoned, baniſhed, burned.
" If you can ſhow among the laws that have been made
" in England concerning religion, (and I think I may
" ſay any where elſe) any one that puniſhes men for not
" having impartially examined the religion they have
" embraced or refuſed, I think I may yield you the
" cauſe. Law-makers have been generally wiſer than
" to make laws that could not be executed: and there-
" fore their laws were againſt nonconformiſts, which
" could be known; and not for impartial examination,
" which could not. It was not then beſide the author's
" buſineſs, to bring an argument againſt the perſecu-
" tions here in faſhion. He did not know that any one,
" who was ſo free as to acknowledge that the magiſtrate
" has not an authority to compel any one to his reli-
" gion, and thereby at once, as you have done, give
" up all the laws now in force againſt the Diſſenters;
" had yet rods in ſtore for them, and by a new trick
" would bring them under the laſh of the law, when
" the old pretences were too much exploded to ſerve
" any longer. Have you never heard of ſuch a thing as
" the religion eſtabliſhed by law? which is it ſeems the
" lawful religion of a country, and to be complied
" with as ſuch. There being ſuch things, ſuch notions
" yet in the world, it was not quite beſide the author's
" buſineſs to allege, that God never gave ſuch autho-
" rity to one man over another, as to compel any one
" to his religion. I will grant, if you pleaſe, religion
" eſtabliſhed by law is a pretty odd way of ſpeaking in
" the mouth of a chriſtian, and yet it is much in fa-
" ſhion, as if the magiſtrate's authority could add any
" force or ſanction to any religion, whether true or

" falſe. I am glad to find you have ſo far conſidered " the magiſtrate's authority, that you agree with the " author, that he hath none to compel men to his reli- " gion. Much leſs can he, by any eſtabliſhment of " law, add any thing to the truth or validity of his own, " or any religion whatſoever."

That above annexed is all the anſwer you think this paragraph of mine deſerves. But yet in that little you ſay, you muſt give me leave to take notice, " that if, " as you ſay, the magiſtrate's authority may do much " towards the upholding and preſerving the true reli- " gion within his juriſdiction ;" ſo alſo may it do much towards the upholding and preſerving of a falſe religion, and in that reſpect, if you ſay true, may be ſaid to eſta- bliſh it. For I think I need not mind you here again, that it muſt unavoidably depend upon his opinion what ſhall be eſtabliſhed for true, or rejected as falſe.

And thus you have my thoughts concerning the moſt material of what you ſay touching the magiſtrate's com- miſſion to uſe force in matters of religion, together with ſome incident places in your anſwer, which I have taken notice of as they have come in my way.

CHAPTER III.

Who are to be puniſhed by your ſcheme.

TO juſtify the largeneſs of the author's toleration, who would not have jews, mahometans, and pa- gans excluded from the civil rights of the common- wealth, becauſe of their religion ; I ſaid, " I feared it " will hardly be believed, that we pray in earneſt for " their converſion, if we exclude them from the ordi- " nary and profitable means of it, either by driving " them from, or perſecuting them when they are amongſt " us." You reply : " now I confeſs I thought men

" might live quietly enough among us, and enjoy the " protection of the government againſt all violence and " injuries, without being endenizened, or made mem- " bers of the commonwealth; which alone can entitle " them to the civil rights and privileges of it. But as " to jews, mahometans, and pagans, if any of them " do not care to live among us, unleſs they may be ad- " mitted to the rights and privileges of the common- " wealth; the refuſing them that favour is not, I ſup- " poſe, to be looked upon as driving them from us, or " excluding them from the ordinary and probable means " of converſion; but as a juſt and neceſſary caution in " a chriſtian commonwealth, in reſpect to the members " of it: who, if ſuch as profeſs judaiſm, or mahome- " taniſm, or paganiſm, were permitted to enjoy the ſame " rights with them, would be much the more in danger " to be ſeduced by them; ſeeing they would loſe no " worldly advantage by ſuch a change of their religion: " whereas if they could not turn to any of thoſe reli- " gions, without forfeiting the civil rights of the com- " monwealth by doing it, it is likely they would con- " ſider well before they did it, what ground there was " to expect that they ſhould get any thing by the ex- " change, which would countervail the loſs they ſhould " ſuſtain by it." I thought protection and impunity of men, not offending in civil things, might have been accounted the civil rights of the commonwealth, which the author meant: but you, to make it ſeem more, add the word privileges. Let it be ſo. Live amongſt you then jews, mahometans, and pagans may; but endeni- zened they muſt not be. But why? Are there not thoſe who are members of your commonwealth, who do not embrace the truth that muſt ſave them, any more than they? What think you of ſocinians, papiſts, anabaptiſts, quakers, preſbyterians? If they do not reject the truth neceſſary to ſalvation, why do you puniſh them? Or if ſome that are in the way to perdition, may be members of the commonwealth, why muſt theſe be excluded upon the account of religion? For I think there is no great odds, as to ſaving of ſouls, which is the only end for which they are puniſhed, amongſt thoſe religions, each

whereof will make thoſe who are of it miſs ſalvation. Only if there be any fear of ſeducing thoſe who are of the national church, the danger is moſt from that religion which comes neareſt to it, and moſt reſembles it. However, this you think "but a juſt and neceſſary "caution in a chriſtian commonwealth in reſpect of "the members of it." I ſuppoſe, for you love to ſpeak doubtfully, theſe members of a chriſtian commonwealth you take ſuch care of, are members alſo of the national church, whoſe religion is the true; and therefore you call them in the next paragraph, ſubjects of Chriſt's kingdom, to whom he has a ſpecial regard. For diſſenters, who are puniſhed to be made good chriſtians, to whom force is uſed "to bring them to the true re-"ligion, and to the communion of the church of God," it is plain are not in your opinion good chriſtians, or of the true religion; unleſs you puniſh them to make them what they are already. The diſſenters therefore who are already perverted, and reject the truth that muſt ſave them, you are not I ſuppoſe ſo careful of, leſt they ſhould be ſeduced. Thoſe who have already the plague, need not be guarded from infection: nor can you fear that men ſo deſperately perverſe, that penalties and puniſhments, joined to the light and ſtrength of the truth, have not been able to bring from the opinions they have eſpouſed into the communion of the church, ſhould be ſeduced to judaiſm, mahometiſm, or paganiſm, neither of which has the advantage of truth or intereſt to prevail by. It is therefore thoſe of the national church, as I conclude alſo from the cloſe of this paragraph, where you ſpeak of God's own peculiar people, whom you think would be much the more in danger to be ſeduced by them, if they were endenizened, ſince they would loſe no worldly advantage by ſuch a change of their religion, i. e. by quitting the national church, to turn jews, mahometans, or pagans.

This ſhows, whatever you ſay of the ſufficient means of inſtruction provided by the law, how well you think the members of the national church are inſtructed in the true religion. It ſhows alſo, whatever you ſay of its being preſumable that they embrace it upon conviction,

viction, how much you are ſatisfied that the members of the national church are convinced of the truth of the religion they profeſs, or rather herd with; ſince you think them in great danger to change it for judaiſm, mahometaniſm, or paganiſm itſelf upon equal terms, and becauſe they ſhall loſe no worldly advantage by ſuch a change. But if the forfeiting the civil rights of the commonwealth be the proper remedy to keep men in the communion of the church, why is it uſed to keep men from judaiſm or paganiſm, and not from fanaticiſm? Upon this account why might not jews, pagans, and mahometans be admitted to the rights of the commonwealth, as far as papiſts, independents, and quakers? But you diſtribute to every one according to your good pleaſure; and doubtleſs are fully juſtified by theſe following words: "And whether this be not a reaſonable "and neceſſary caution, any man may judge, who does "but conſider within how few ages after the flood, ſu- "perſtition and idolatry prevailed over the world, and "how apt even God's own peculiar people were to re- "ceive that mortal infection, notwithſtanding all that "he did to keep them from it."

What the ſtate of religion was in the firſt ages after the flood, is ſo imperfectly known now, that, as I have ſhowed you in another place, you can make little advantage to your cauſe from thence. And ſince it was the ſame corruption then, which, as you own, withdraws men now from the true religion, and hinders it from prevailing by its own light, without the aſſiſtance of force; and it is the ſame corruption that keeps diſſenters, as well as jews, mahometans, and pagans, from embracing of the truth: why different degrees of puniſhments ſhould be uſed to them, till there be found in them different degrees of obſtinacy, would need ſome better reaſon. Why this common pravity of human nature ſhould make judaiſm, mahometiſm, or paganiſm more catching than any ſort of nonconformity, which hinders men from embracing the true religion; ſo that jews, mahometans, and pagans muſt, for fear of infecting others, be ſhut out from the commonwealth, when others are not; I would fain know? Whatever it was

that ſo diſpoſed the jews to idolatry before the captivity, ſure it is, they firmly reſiſted it, and refuſed to change, not only where they might have done it on equal terms, but have had great advantage to boot; and therefore it is poſſible that there is ſomething in this matter, which neither you nor I do fully comprehend, and may with a becoming humility ſit down and confeſs, that in this, as well as other parts of his providence, God's ways are paſt finding out. But of this we may be certain from this inſtance of the jews, that it is not reaſonable to conclude, that becauſe they were once inclined to idolatry, that therefore they, or any other people, are in danger to turn pagans, whenever they ſhall loſe no worldly advantage by ſuch a change. But if we may oppoſe nearer and known inſtances to more remote and uncertain, look into the world, and tell me, ſince Jeſus Chriſt brought life and immortality to light through the goſpel, where the chriſtian religion meeting judaiſm, mahometiſm, or paganiſm upon equal terms, loſt ſo plainly by it, that you have reaſon to ſuſpect the members of a chriſtian commonwealth would be in danger to be ſeduced to either of them, if they ſhould loſe no worldly advantage by ſuch a change of their religion, rather than likely to increaſe among them? Till you can find then ſome better reaſon for excluding jews, &c. from the rights of the commonwealth, you muſt give us leave to look on this as a bare pretence. Beſides, I think you are under a miſtake, which ſhows your pretence againſt admitting jews, mahometans, and pagans to the civil rights of the commonwealth, is ill grounded; for what law I pray is there in England, that they who turn to any of thoſe religions, forfeit the civil rights of the commonwealth by doing it? Such a law I deſire you to ſhow me; and if you cannot, all this pretence is out of doors, and men of your church, ſince on that account they would loſe no worldly advantage by the change, are in as much danger to be ſeduced, whether jews, mahometans, and pagans are endenizened or no.

But that you may not be thought too gracious, you tell us, "That as to pagans particularly, you are ſo far

"from

" from thinking that they ought not to be excluded " from the civil rights of the commonwealth, becauſe " of their religion, that you cannot ſee how their reli- " gion can be ſuffered by any commonwealth that " knows and worſhips the only true God, if they would " be thought to retain any jealouſy for his honour, or " even for that of human nature." Thus then you order the matter; jews and mahometans may be permitted to live in a chriſtian commonwealth with the exerciſe of their religion, but not be endenizened: pagans may alſo be permitted to live there, but not to have the exerciſe of their religion, nor be endenizened.

This according to the beſt of my apprehenſion is the ſenſe of your words; for the clearneſs of your thoughts, or your cauſe, does not always ſuffer you to ſpeak plainly and directly; as here, having been ſpeaking a whole page before what uſage the perſons of jews, mahometans, and pagans were to have, you on a ſudden tell us their religion is not to be ſuffered, but ſay not what muſt be done with their perſons. For do you think it reaſonable that men who have any religion, ſhould live amongſt you without the exerciſe of that religion, in order to their converſion? which is no other but to make them down-right irreligious, and render the very notion of a deity inſignificant, and of no influence to them in order to their converſion. It being leſs dangerous to religion in general to have men ignorant of a deity, and ſo without any religion; than to have them acknowledge a ſuperiour Being, but yet to teach or allow them to neglect or refuſe worſhipping him in that way, that they believe he requires, to render them acceptable to him: it being a great deal leſs fault (and that which we were every one of us once guilty of) to be ignorant of him, than acknowledging a God, not to pay him the honour which we think due to him. I do not ſee therefore how thoſe who retain any jealouſy for the honour of God, can permit men to live amongſt them in order to their converſion, and require of them not to honour God, according to the beſt of their knowledge: unleſs you think it a preparation to your true religion, to require men ſenſibly and knowingly to affront

front the Deity; and to perſuade them that the religion you would bring them to, can allow men to make bold with the ſenſe they have of him, and to refuſe him the honour which in their conſciences they are perſuaded is due to him, and which muſt to them and every body elſe appear inconſiſtent with all religion. Since therefore to admit their perſons without the exerciſe of their religion, cannot be reaſonable, nor conducing to their converſion; if the exerciſe of their religion, as you ſay, be not to be ſuffered amongſt us till they are converted, I do not ſee how their perſons can be ſuffered amongſt us, if that exception muſt be added, till they are converted; and whether then they are not excluded from the ordinary means of converſion, I leave you to conſider.

I wonder this neceſſity had not made you think on another way of their having the ordinary means of converſion, without their living amongſt us, that way by which in the beginning of chriſtianity it was brought to the heathen world by the travels and preaching of the apoſtles. But the ſucceſſors of the apoſtles are not, it ſeems, ſucceſſors to this part of the commiſſion, Go and teach all nations. And indeed it is one thing to be an ambaſſador from God to people that are already converted, and have provided good benefices; another to be an ambaſſador from heaven in a country where you have neither the countenance of the magiſtrate, nor the devout obedience of the people. And who ſees not how one is bound to be zealous for the propagating of the true religion, and the convincing, converting, and ſaving of ſouls in a country where it is eſtabliſhed by law? who can doubt but that there thoſe who talk ſo much of it are in earneſt? Though yet ſome men will hardly forbear doubting, that thoſe men, however they pray for it, are not much concerned for the converſion of pagans, who will neither go to them to inſtruct them, nor ſuffer them to come to us for the means of converſion.

It is true what you ſay, "what pagans call religion "is abomination to the Almighty." But if that requires any thing from thoſe who retain any jealouſy for the

the honour of God, it is ſomething more than barely about the place where thoſe abominations ſhall be committed. The true concern for the honour of God is not, that idolatry ſhould be ſhut out of England, but that it ſhould be leſſened every-where, and by the light and preaching of the goſpel be baniſhed out of the world. If pagans and idolaters are, as you ſay, the "greateſt diſhonour conceivable to God almighty," they are as much ſo on the other ſide of Tweed, or the ſea, as on this; for he from his throne equally beholds all the dwellers upon earth. Thoſe therefore who are truly jealous for the honour of God, will not, upon the account of his honour, be concerned for their being in this or that place, while there are idolaters in the world; but that the number of thoſe who are ſuch a diſhonour to him, ſhould every day be as much as poſſible diminiſhed, and they be brought to give him his due tribute of honour and praiſe in a right way of worſhip. It is in this that a jealouſy, which is in earneſt for God's honour, truly ſhows itſelf, in wiſhing and endeavouring to abate the abomination, and drive idolatry out of the world; not in driving idolaters out of any one country, or ſending them away to places and company, where they ſhall find more encouragement to it. It is a ſtrange jealouſy for the honour of God, that looks not beyond ſuch a mountain or river as divides a chriſtian and pagan country. Wherever idolatry is committed, there God's honour is concerned; and thither men's jealouſy for his honour, if it be ſincere indeed, will extend, and be in pain to leſſen and take away the provocation. But the place God is provoked and diſhonoured in, which is a narrow conſideration in reſpect of the Lord of all the earth, will no otherwiſe employ their zeal, who are in earneſt, than as it may more or leſs conduce to their converſion of the offenders.

But if your jealouſy for the honour of God engages you ſo far againſt men's committing idolatry in certain places, that you think thoſe ought to be excluded from the rights of the commonwealth, and not to be ſuffered to be denizens, who, according to that place in the Romans brought by you, are "without excuſe, becauſe "when

" when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, " but became vain in their imagination, and changed " the glory of the incorruptible God into an image " made like to corruptible man." I ſhall only change ſome of the words in the text you cite of Iſaiah, " I " have baked part thereof on the coals, and eaten it, " and ſhall I make the reſidue thereof a God? ſhall I " fall down to that which comes of a plant?" and ſo leave them with you to conſider whether your jealouſy in earneſt carries you ſo far as you talk of; and whether when you have looked about you, you are ſtill of the mind, that thoſe who do ſuch things ſhall be diſfranchiſed and ſent away, and the exerciſe of no ſuch religion be any where permitted amongſt us? for thoſe things are no leſs an abomination to God under a chriſtian than pagan name. One word more I have to ſay to your jealouſy for the honour of God, that if it be any thing more than in talk, it will ſet itſelf no leſs earneſtly againſt other abominations, and the practiſers of them, than againſt that of idolatry.

As to that in Job xxxi. 26, 27, 28, where he ſays " idolatry is to be puniſhed by the judge;" this place alone, were there no other, is ſufficient to confirm their opinion, who conclude that book writ by a jew. And how little the puniſhing of idolatry in that commonwealth concerns our preſent caſe, I refer you for information to the author's letter. But how does your jealouſy for the honour of God carry you to an excluſion of the pagan religion from amongſt you, but yet admit of the jewiſh and mahometan? Or is not the honour of God concerned in their denying our Saviour?

If we are to look upon Job to have been writ before the time of Moſes, as the author would have it, p. 32. and ſo by a ſtranger to the commonwealth of Iſrael; it is plain the general apoſtacy he lays ſo much ſtreſs on, was not ſpread ſo far, but that there was a government by his own confeſſion, eſtabliſhed out of Judea, free from, nay zealous againſt idolatry: and why there might not be many more as well as this, which we hear of but by chance, it will concern him to ſhow.

You

You go on, " But as to the converting jews, maho-
" hometans, and pagans to chriſtianity, I fear there
" will be no great progreſs made in it, till chriſtians
" come to a better agreement and union among them-
" ſelves. I am ſure our Saviour prayed that all that
" ſhould believe in him, might be one in the Father
" and him," (i. e. I ſuppoſe in that holy religion which he taught them from the Father) that the world might believe that the Father had ſent him: " and therefore
" when he comes to make inquiſition, why no more
" jews, mahometans, and pagans have been converted
" to his religion; I very much fear, that a great part
" of the blame will be found to lie upon the authors
" and promoters of ſects and diviſions among the pro-
" feſſors of it: which therefore, I think, all that are
" guilty, and all that would not be guilty, ought well
" to conſider."

I eaſily grant that " our Saviour prayed that all
" might be one in that holy religion which he taught
" them," and in that very prayer teaches what that religion is, " This is life eternal, that they might know
" thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou
" haſt ſent." John xvii. 3. But muſt it be expected, that therefore they ſhould all be of one mind in things not neceſſary to ſalvation? for whatever unity it was our Saviour prayed for here, it is certain the apoſtles themſelves did not all of them agree in every thing: but even the chief of them have had differences amongſt them in matters of religion, as appears, Gal. ii. 11.

An agreement in truths neceſſary to ſalvation, and the maintaining of charity and brotherly kindneſs with the diverſity of opinions in other things, is that which will very well conſiſt with chriſtian unity, and is all poſſibly to be had in this world, in ſuch an incurable weakneſs and difference of men's underſtandings. This probably would contribute more to the converſion of jews, mahometans, and pagans, if there were propoſed to them and others, for their admittance into the church, only the plain ſimple truths of the goſpel neceſſary to ſalvation, than all the fruitleſs pudder and talk about uniting chriſtians in matters of leſs moment, accord-

ing

ing to the draught and prescription of a certain set of men any-where.

" What blame will lie on the authors and promoters " of sects and divisions," and, let me add, animosities amongst christians, " when Christ comes to make in- " quisition why no more jews, mahometans, and pa- " gans were converted, they who are concerned ought " certainly well to consider." And to abate in great measure this mischief for the future, they who talk so much of sects and divisions, would do well to consider too, whether those are not most authors and promoters of sects and divisions, who impose creeds, and ceremonies and articles of men's making; and make things not necessary to salvation, the necessary terms of communion, excluding and driving from them such as out of conscience and persuasion cannot assent and submit to them; and treating them as if they were utter aliens from the church of God, and such as were deservedly shut out as unfit to be members of it: who narrow christianity within bounds of their own making, which the gospel knows nothing of; and often, for things by themselves confessed indifferent, thrust men out of their communion, and then punish them for not being of it.

Who sees not, but the bond of unity might be preserved, in the different persuasions of men concerning things not necessary to salvation, if they were not made necessary to church communion? What two thinkiug men of the church of England are there, who differ not one from the other in several material points of religion, who nevertheless are members of the same church, and in unity one with another? Make but one of those points the Shibboleth of a party, and erect it into an article of the national church, and they are presently divided; and he of the two, whose judgment happens not to agree with national orthodoxy, is immediately cut off from communion. Who I beseech you is it in this case that makes the sect? Is it not those who contract the church of Christ within limits of their own contrivance? who, by articles and ceremonies of their own forming, separate from their communion all that have not persuasions which just jump with their model?

It

It is frivolous here to pretend authority. No man has or can have authority to ſhut any one out of the church of Chriſt, for that for which Chriſt himſelf will not ſhut him out of heaven. Whoſoever does ſo, is truly the author and promoter of ſchiſm and diviſion, ſets up a ſect, and tears in pieces the church of Chriſt, of which every one who believes, and practiſes what is neceſſary to ſalvation, is a part and member; and cannot, without the guilt of ſchiſm, be ſeparated from, or kept out of its external communion. In this "lording "it over the heritage of God," 1 Pet. v. 2, 3. and thus over-ſeeing by impoſition on the unwilling, and not conſenting, (which ſeems to be the meaning of St. Peter) moſt of the laſting ſects which ſo mangle chriſtianity, had their original, and continue to have their ſupport: and were it not for theſe eſtabliſhed ſects under the ſpecious names of national churches, which, by their contracted and arbitrary limits of communion, juſtify againſt themſelves the ſeparation and like narrowneſs of others; the difference of opinions which do not ſo much begin to be, as to appear aad be owned under toleration, would either make no ſect nor diviſion; or elſe, if they were ſo extravagant as to be oppoſite to what is neceſſary to ſalvation, and ſo neceſſitate a ſeparation; the clear light of the goſpel, joined with a ſtrict diſcipline of manners, would quickly chace them out of the world. But whilſt needleſs impoſitions and moot points in divinity are eſtabliſhed by the penal laws of kingdoms, and the ſpecious pretences of authority; what hope is there, that there ſhould be ſuch an union amongſt chriſtians any where, as might invite a rational turk or infidel to embrace a religion, whereof he is told they have a revelation from God, which yet in ſome places he is not ſuffered to read, and in no place ſhall he be permitted to underſtand for himſelf, or to follow according to the beſt of his underſtanding, when it ſhall at all thwart (though in things confeſſed not neceſſary to ſalvation) any of thoſe ſelect points of doctrine, diſcipline, or outward worſhip, whereof the national church has been pleaſed to make up its articles, polity, and ceremonies? And I aſk, what a ſober ſenſible heathen muſt think of

the

the diviſions amongſt chriſtians not owing to toleration, if he ſhould find in an iſland, where chriſtianity ſeems to be in its greateſt purity, the ſouth and north parts eſtabliſhing churches upon the differences of only whether fewer or more, thus and thus choſen, ſhould govern; though the revelation they both pretend to be their rule, ſay nothing directly one way or the other: each contending with ſo much eagerneſs, that they deny each other to be churches of Chriſt, that is, in effect, to be true chriſtians? To which if one ſhould add tranſubſtantiation, conſubſtantiation, real preſence, articles and diſtinctions ſet up by men without authority from ſcripture; and other leſs differences, which good chriſtians may diſſent about without endangering their ſalvation, eſtabliſhed by law in the ſeveral parts of Chriſtendom: I aſk, whether the magiſtrates interpoſing in matters of religion, and eſtabliſhing national churches by the force and penalties of civil laws, with their diſtinct (and at home reputed neceſſary) confeſſions and ceremonies, do not by law and power authorize and perpetuate ſects among chriſtians, to the great prejudice of chriſtianity, and ſcandal to infidels, more than any thing that can ariſe from a mutual toleration, with charity and a good life?

Thoſe who have ſo much in their mouths, "the au-"thors of ſects and diviſions," with ſo little advantage to their cauſe, I ſhall deſire to conſider, whether national churches eſtabliſhed as now they are, are not as much ſects and diviſions in chriſtianity, as ſmaller collections, under the name of diſtinct churches, are in reſpect of the national? Only with this difference, that theſe ſubdiviſions and diſcountenanced ſects, wanting power to enforce their peculiar doctrines and diſcipline uſually live more friendly like chriſtians, and ſeem only to demand chriſtian liberty; whereby there is leſs appearance of unchriſtian diviſion among them, whereas thoſe national ſects, being backed by the civil power, which they never fail to make uſe of, at leaſt as a pretence of authority over their brethren, uſually breathe out nothing but force and perſecution, to the great reproach, ſhame, and diſhonour of the chriſtian religion.

I ſaid,

I ſaid, "that if the magiſtrates would ſeverely and "impartially ſet themſelves againſt vice in whomſoever "it is found, and leave men to their own conſciences "in their articles of faith, and ways of worſhip, true "religion would ſpread wider, and be more fruitful in "the lives of its profeſſors than ever hitherto it has "done by the impoſing of creeds and ceremonies." Here I call only immorality of manners, vice; you on the contrary, in your anſwer, give the name of vice to errours in opinion, and difference in ways of worſhip from the national church: for this is the matter in queſtion between us, expreſs it as you pleaſe. This being a conteſt only about the ſignification of a ſhort ſyllable in the Engliſh tongue, we muſt leave to the maſters of that language to judge which of theſe two is the proper uſe of it. But yet, from my uſing the word vice, you conclude preſently, taking it in your ſenſe, not mine, that the magiſtrate has a power in England, for England we are ſpeaking of, to puniſh diſſenters from the national religion, becauſe it is a vice. I will, if you pleaſe, in what I ſaid, change the word vice into that I meant by it, and ſay thus, if the magiſtrates will ſeverely and impartially ſet themſelves againſt the diſhoneſty and debauchery of men's lives, and ſuch immoralities as I contra-diſtinguiſh from errours in ſpeculative opinions of religion, and ways of worſhip: and then pray ſee how your anſwer will look, for thus it runs: "It ſeems then with you the rejecting the true "religion, and refuſing to worſhip God in decent ways "preſcribed by thoſe to whom God has left the order-"ing of thoſe matters, are not comprehended in the "name vice." But you tell me, "If I except theſe "things, and will not allow them to be called by the "name of vice, perhaps other men may think it as "reaſonable to except ſome other things [i. e. from "being called vices] which they have a kindneſs for: "for inſtance, ſome may perhaps except arbitrary di-"vorce, polygamy, concubinage, ſimple fornication, "or marrying within degrees thought forbidden." Let them except theſe, and if you will, drunkenneſs, theft, and murder too, from the name of vice; nay, call them

virtues: will they, by their calling them ſo, be exempt from the magiſtrate's power of puniſhing them? Or can they claim an impunity by what I have ſaid? Will theſe immoralities by the names any one ſhall give, or forbear to give them, "become articles of faith, or ways "of worſhip?" Which is all, as I expreſsly ſay in the words you here cite of mine, that I would have the magiſtrates leave men to their own conſciences in. But, ſir, you have, for me, liberty of conſcience to uſe words in what ſenſe you pleaſe; only I think, where another is concerned, it ſavours more of ingenuity and love of truth, rather to mind the ſenſe of him that ſpeaks, than to make a duſt and noiſe with a miſtaken word, if any ſuch advantage were given you.

You ſay, "that ſome men would through careleſſneſs "never acquaint themſelves with the truths which muſt "ſave them, without being forced to do it, which (you "ſuppoſe) may be very true, notwithſtanding that (as "I ſay) ſome are called at the third hour, ſome at the "ninth, and ſome at the eleventh hour; and whenever "they are called, they embrace all the truths neceſſary "to ſalvation. At leaſt I do not ſhow why it may not: "and therefore this may be no ſlip, for any thing I "have ſaid to prove it to be one." This I take not to be an anſwer to my argument, which was, that, ſince ſome are not called till the eleventh hour, no-body can know who thoſe are, "who would never acquaint them-"ſelves with thoſe truths that muſt ſave them, with-"out force," which is therefore neceſſary, and may indirectly and at a diſtance do them ſome ſervice. Whether that was my argument or no, I leave the reader to judge: but that you may not miſtake it now again, I tell you here it is ſo, and needs another anſwer.

Your way of uſing puniſhments in ſhort is this, that all that conform not to the national church, where it is true, as in England, ſhould be puniſhed; what for? "to make them conſider." This I told you had ſomething of impracticable. To which you reply, that you uſed the word only in another ſenſe, which I miſtook. Whether I miſtook your meaning in the uſe of that word or no, or whether it was natural ſo to take it, or whether

ther that opinion which I charged on you by that miſtake, when you tell us, " that not examining, is in- " deed the next end for which they are puniſhed," be not your opinion, let us leave to the reader; for when you have that word in what ſenſe you pleaſe, what I ſaid will be nevertheleſs true, viz. " That to puniſh " diſſenters, as diſſenters, to make them conſider, has " ſomething impracticable in it, unleſs not to be of the " national religion, and not to conſider, be the ſame " thing." Theſe words you anſwer nothing to, having as you thought a great advantage of talking about my miſtake of your word only. But unleſs you will ſuppoſe, not to be of the national church, and not to conſider, be the ſame thing, it will follow, that to puniſh diſſenters, as diſſenters, to make them conſider, has ſomething of impracticable in it.

The law puniſhes all diſſenters: for what? To make them all conform, that's evident; to what end? To make them all conſider, ſay you: that cannot be, for it ſays nothing of it; nor is it certain that all diſſenters have not conſidered; nor is there any care taken by the law to inquire whether they have conſidered, when they do conform; yet this was the end intended by the magiſtrate. So then with you it is practicable and allowable in making laws, for the legiſlator to lay puniſhments by law on men, for an end which they may be ignorant of, for he ſays nothing of it; on men, whom he never takes care to inquire, whether they have done it or no, before he relax the puniſhment, which had no other next end but to make them do it. But though he ſays nothing of conſidering, in laying on the penalties, nor aſks any thing about it, when he takes them off; yet every body muſt underſtand that he ſo meant it. Sir, Sancho Pancha, in the government of his iſland, did not expect that men ſhould underſtand his meaning by his gaping: but in another iſland it ſeems, if you had the management, you would not think it to have any thing of impracticable or impolitic in it: for how far the proviſion of means of inſtruction takes this off, we ſhall ſee in another place. And, laſtly, to lay puniſhments on men for an end which is already at-

tained, for ſome among the diſſenters may have conſidered, is what other law-makers look on as impracticable, or at leaſt unjuſt. But to this you anſwer, in your uſual way of circle, That " if" I " ſuppoſe you " are for puniſhing diſſenters whether they conſider or " no," I " am in a great miſtake; for the diſſenters " (which is my word, not your's) whom" you " are " for puniſhing, are only ſuch as reject the true religion " propoſed to them, with reaſons and arguments ſuffi- " cient to convince them of the truth of it, who there- " fore can never be ſuppoſed to conſider thoſe reaſons " and arguments as they ought, whilſt they perſiſt in " rejecting that religion, or (in my language) continue " diſſenters; for if they did ſo conſider them, they " would not continue diſſenters." Of the fault for which men were to be puniſhed, diſtinguiſhed from the end for which they were to be puniſhed, we heard nothing, as I remember, in the firſt draught of your ſcheme, which we had in " the argument conſidered," &c. But I doubt not but in your general terms you will be able to find it, or what elſe you pleaſe: for now having ſpoken out, that men, who are of a different religion from the true, which has been tendered them with ſufficient evidence, (and who are they whom the wiſe and benign diſpoſer and governor of all things has not furniſhed with competent means of ſalvation) are criminal, and are by the magiſtrate to be puniſhed as ſuch, it is neceſſary your ſcheme ſhould be completed; and whither that will carry you, it is eaſy to ſee.

But pray, ſir, are there no conformiſts that ſo reject the true religion? and would you have them puniſhed too, as you here profeſs? Make that practicable by your ſcheme, and you have done ſomething to perſuade us that your end in earneſt, in the uſe of force, is to make men conſider, underſtand, and be of the true religion; and that the rejecting the true religion tendered with ſufficient evidence, is the crime which bonâ fide you would have puniſhed; and till you do this, all that you may ſay concerning puniſhing men " to make them " conſider as they ought, to make them receive the " true

" true religion, to make them embrace the truth that " muſt ſave them," &c. will, with all ſober, judicious, and unbiaſſed readers, paſs only for the mark of great zeal, if it ſcape amongſt men as warm and as ſagacious as you are, a harſher name: whilſt thoſe conformiſts, who neglect matters of religion, who reject the ſaving truths of the goſpel, as viſibly and as certainly as any diſſenters, have yet no penalties laid upon them.

You talk much " of conſidering and not conſidering " as one ought; of embracing and rejecting the true " religion," and abundance more to this purpoſe; which all, however very good and ſavoury words, that look very well, when you come to the application of force, to procure that end expreſſed in them, amount to no more but conformity and non-conformity. If you ſee not this, I pity you; for I would fain think you a fair man, who means well, though you have not light upon the right way to the end you propoſe: but if you ſee it, and perſiſt in your uſe of theſe good expreſſions to lead men into a miſtake in this matter; conſider what my pagans and mahometans could do worſe to ſerve a bad cauſe.

Whatever you may imagine, I write ſo in this argument, as I have before my eyes the account I ſhall one day render for my intention and regard to truth in the management of it. I look on myſelf as liable to errour as others; but this I am ſure of, I would neither impoſe on you, myſelf, nor any body; and ſhould be very glad to have the truth in this point clearly eſtabliſhed: and therefore it is, I deſire you again to examine, whether all the ends you name to be intended by your uſe of force, do in effect, when force is to be your way put in practice, reach any farther than bare outward conformity? Pray conſider whether it be not that which makes you ſo ſhy of the term diſſenters, which you tell me is mine, not your word. Since none are by your ſcheme to be puniſhed, but thoſe who do not conform to the national religion, diſſenters, I think, is the proper name to call them by; and I can ſee no reaſon you have to boggle at it, unleſs your opinion has ſomething in it you are unwilling ſhould

be ſpoke out, and called by its right name: but whether you like it or no, perſecution and perſecution of diſſenters, are names that belong to it as it ſtands now.

And now I think I may leave you your queſtion, wherein you aſk, "But cannot diſſenters be puniſhed for not "being of the national religion, as the fault, and yet "only to make them conſider, as the end for which "they are puniſhed?" to be anſwered by yourſelf, or to be uſed again, where you think there is any need of ſo nice a diſtinction, as between the fault for which men are puniſhed by laws, and the end for which they are puniſhed. For to me I confeſs it is hard to find any other immediate end of puniſhment in the intention of human laws, but the amendment of the fault puniſhed; though it may be ſubordinate to other and remoter ends. If the law be only to puniſh non-conformity, one may truly ſay, to cure that fault, or to produce conformity, is the end of that law; and there is nothing elſe immediately aimed at by that law, but conformity; and whatever elſe it tends to as an end, muſt be only as a conſequence of conformity, whether it be edification, increaſe of charity, or ſaving of ſouls, or whatever elſe may be thought a conſequence of conformity. So that in a law, which with penalties requires conformity, and nothing elſe; one cannot ſay, properly I think, that conſideration is the end of that law; unleſs conſideration be a conſequence of conformity, to which conformity is ſubordinate, and does naturally conduce, or elſe is neceſſary to it.

To my arguing that it is unjuſt as well as impracticable, you reply, "Where the national church is the "true church of God, to which all men ought to join "themſelves, and ſufficient evidence is offered to con-"vince men that it is ſo: there it is a fault to be out "of the national church, becauſe it is a fault not to be "convinced that the national church is that true church "of God. And therefore ſince there men's not being "ſo convinced, can only be imputed to their not con-"ſidering as they ought, the evidence which is offered "to convince them; it cannot be unjuſt to puniſh

"them

" them to make them so to consider it." Pray tell me, which is a man's duty, to be of the national church first; or to be convinced first, that its religion is true, and then to be of it? If it be his duty to be convinced first, why then do you punish him for not being of it, when it is his duty to be convinced of the truth of its religion, before it is his duty to be of it? If you say it is his duty to be of it first; why then is not force used to him afterwards, though he be still ignorant and unconvinced? But you answer, " It is his fault not to " be convinced." What, every one's fault everywhere? No, you limit it to places where " sufficient " evidence is offered to convince men that the national " church is the true church of God." To which pray let me add, the national church is so the true church of God, that no-body out of its communion can embrace the truth that must save him, or be in the way to salvation. For if a man may be in the way to salvation out of the national church, he is enough in the true church, and needs no force to bring him into any other: for when a man is in the way to salvation, there is no necessity of force to bring him into any church of any denomination, in order to his salvation. So that not to be of the national church, though true, will not be a fault which the magistrate has a right to punish, until sufficient evidence is offered to prove that a man cannot be saved out of it. Now since you tell us, that by sufficient evidence you mean such as will certainly win assent; when you have offered such evidence to convince men that the national church, any where, is so the true church, that men cannot be saved out of its communion, I think I may allow them to be so faulty as to deserve what punishment you shall think fit. If you hope to mend the matter by the following words, where you say, that where such " evidence is offered, " there men's not being convinced can only be imputed " to men's not considering as they ought," they will not help you. For " to consider as they ought," being, by your own interpretation, " to consider so as " not to reject;" then your answer amounts to just thus much, " That it is a fault not to be convinced that the

" national church is the true church of God, where " ſufficient evidence is offered to convince men that it " is ſo. Sufficient evidence is ſuch as will certainly " gain aſſent with thoſe who conſider as they ought, " i. e. who conſider ſo as not to reject, or to be moved " heartily to embrace," which I think is to be convinced. Who can have the heart now to deny any of this? Can there be any thing ſurer, than that men's not being convinced, is to be imputed to them if they are not convinced, where ſuch evidence is offered to them as does convince them? And to puniſh all ſuch, you have my free conſent.

Whether all you ſay have any thing more in it than this, I appeal to my readers: and ſhould willingly do it to you, did not I fear, that the jumbling of thoſe good and plauſible words in your head, " of ſufficient " evidence, conſider as one ought," &c. might a little jargogle your thoughts, and lead you hoodwinked the round of your own beaten circle. This is a danger thoſe are much expoſed to, who accuſtom themſelves to relative and doubtful terms, and ſo put together, that, though aſunder they ſignify ſomething, yet, when their meaning comes to be caſt up as they are placed, it amounts to juſt nothing.

You go on, " What juſtice it would be for the magi- " ſtrate to puniſh one for not being a carteſian, it will " be time enough to conſider when I have proved it to " be as neceſſary for men to be carteſians, as it is to be " chriſtians, or members of God's church." This will be a much better anſwer to what I ſaid, when you have proved that to be a chriſtian or a member of God's church, it is neceſſary for a diſſenter to be of the church of England. If it be not juſtice to puniſh a man for not being a carteſian, becauſe it is not as neceſſary to be a carteſian, as to be a chriſtian; I fear the ſame argument will hold againſt puniſhing a man for not uſing the croſs in baptiſm, or not kneeling at the Lord's Supper; and it will lie on you to prove, that it is as neceſſary to uſe the croſs in baptiſm, or kneeling at the Lord's Supper, as it is to be a chriſtian: for if they are not as neceſſary as it is to be a chriſtian, you cannot by

by your own rule, without injuſtice, puniſh men for not conforming to a church wherein they are made an indiſpenſable part of conformity; and by this rule it will be injuſtice to puniſh any man for not being of that church wherein any thing is required not neceſſary to ſalvation; for that, I think, is the neceſſity of being a chriſtian.

To ſhow the unreaſonableneſs of puniſhing diſſenters to make them examine, I ſaid, " that ſo they were " puniſhed for not having offended againſt a law; for " there is no law of the land that requires them to " examine." Your reply is, That " you think the " contrary is plain enough: for where the laws provide " ſufficient means of inſtruction in the true religion, " and then require all men to embrace that religion; " you think the moſt natural conſtruction of thoſe " laws is, that they require men to embrace it upon " inſtruction and conviction, as it cannot be expected " they ſhould do without examining the grounds upon " which it ſtands." Your anſwer were very true, if they could not embrace without examining and conviction. But ſince there is a ſhorter way to embracing, which coſts no more pains than walking as far as the church, your anſwer no more proves that the law requires examining, than if a man at Harwich being ſubpœnaed to appear in Weſtminſter-Hall next term, you ſhould ſay the ſubpœna required him to come by ſea, becauſe there was ſufficient means provided for his paſſage in the ordinary boat that by appointment goes conſtantly from Harwich to London: but he taking it to be more for his eaſe and diſpatch, goes the ſhorter way by land, and finds that having made his appearance in court as was required, the law is ſatisfied, and there is no inquiry made, what way he came thither.

If therefore men can embrace ſo as to ſatisfy the law without examining, and it be true that they ſo " fly " from the means of right information, are ſo negligent " in, and averſe to examining," that there is need of penalties to make them do it, as you tell us at large; how is it a natural conſtruction of thoſe laws, that they require

require men to examine, which having provided ſufficient means of inſtruction, require men only to conform, without ſaying any thing of examining? eſpecially when the cauſe aſſigned by you of men's neglecting to examine, is not want of "means of inſtruction, but want of penalties to over-balance their "averſion" to the uſing thoſe means; which you yourſelf confeſs, where you ſay, "When the beſt proviſion "is made that can be, for the inſtruction of the people, "you fear a great part of them will ſtill need penalties "to bring them to hear and receive inſtruction:" and therefore perhaps the remainder of that paragraph, when you have conſidered it again, will not appear ſo impertinent a declamation as you are pleaſed to think it: for it charged your method, as it then ſtood, of puniſhing men for not conſidering and examining, with theſe abſurdities, that it puniſhed men for not doing that which the law did not require of them, nor declare the neglect of to be a fault; contrary to the ends of all laws, contrary to the common ſenſe of mankind, and the practice of all law-makers; who always firſt declared the fault, and then denounced penalties againſt thoſe who after a time ſet ſhould be found guilty of it. It charged your method, that it allows not impunity to the innocent, but puniſhes whole tribes together, the innocent with the guilty; and that the thing deſigned in the law was not mentioned in it, but left to the people, whoſe fault was want of conſideration, to be by conſideration found out.

To avoid theſe abſurdities, you have reformed your ſcheme, and now in your reply own with the frankeſt perſecutors, that you puniſh men downright for their religion, and that to be a diſſenter from the true religion, is a fault to be puniſhed by the magiſtrate. This indeed is plain dealing, and clears your method from theſe abſurdities as long as you keep to it: but wherever you tell us, that your laws are to make men hear, to make men conſider, to make men examine; whilſt the laws themſelves ſay nothing of hearing, conſidering, and examining; there you are ſtill chargeable with all theſe abſurdities: nor will the diſtinction, which without any difference you would ſet up, between the fault

fault for which men were to be punished, and the end for which they are to be punished, do you any service herein, as I have showed you in another place.

To what I said L. II. from p. 88 to p. 95, concerning those who by your scheme are to be punished, you having thought fit not to answer any thing, I shall here again offer it to your consideration:

" Let us inquire, first, Who it is you would have be " punished. In the place above cited, they are those " who are got into a wrong way, and are deaf to all " persuasions. If these are the men to be punished, " let a law be made against them: you have my con- " sent; and that is the proper course to have offenders " punished. For you do not, I hope, intend to punish " any fault by a law, which you do not name in the " law; nor make a law against any fault you would not " have punished. And now, if you are sincere, and in " earnest, and are, as a fair man should be, for what " your words plainly signify, and nothing else; what " will such a law serve for? Men in the wrong way are " to be punished: but who are in the wrong way, is " the question. You have no more reason to determine " it against one, who differs from you, than he has to " conclude against you, who differ from him: no, not " though you have the magistrate and the national " church on your side. For if to differ from them be " to be in the wrong way; you who are in the right " way in England, will be in the wrong way in France. " Every one here must be judge for himself: and your " law will reach nobody, till you have convinced him " he is in the wrong way: and then there will be no " need of punishment to make him consider: unless " you will affirm again what you have denied, and " have men punished for embracing the religion they " believe to be true, when it differs from yours or the " public.

" Besides being in the wrong way, those who you " would have punished, must be such as are deaf to all " persuasions. But any such, I suppose, you will " hardly find, who hearken to no-body, not to those of " their own way. If you mean by deaf to all persua-

" sions

" ſions, all perſuaſions of a contrary party, or of a dif-
" ferent church; ſuch, I ſuppoſe, you may abundantly find
" in your own church, as well as elſewhere; and I
" preſume to them you are ſo charitable, that you
" would not have them puniſhed for not lending an ear
" to ſeducers. For conſtancy in the truth, and per-
" ſeverance in the faith, is, I hope, rather to be
" encouraged, than by any penalties checked in the
" orthodox. And your church, doubtleſs, as well as
" all others, is orthodox to itſelf in all its tenets. If
" you mean by all perſuaſion, all your perſuaſion, or
" all perſuaſion of thoſe of your communion; you do
" but beg the queſtion, and ſuppoſe you have a right
" to puniſh thoſe who differ from, and will not comply
" with you.

" Your next words are,—When men fly from the
" means of a right information, and will not ſo much
" as conſider how reaſonable it is thoroughly and im-
" partially to examine a religion, which they embraced
" upon ſuch inducements as ought to have no ſway at
" all in the matter, and therefore with little or no
" examination of the proper grounds of it; what
" human method can be uſed to bring them to act like
" men, in an affair of ſuch conſequence, and to make
" a wiſer and more rational choice, but that of laying
" ſuch penalties upon them, as may balance the weight
" of thoſe prejudices which inclined them to prefer a
" falſe way before the true, and recover them to ſo
" much ſobriety and reflection, as ſeriouſly to put the
" queſtion to themſelves, Whether it be really worth
" the while to undergo ſuch inconveniencies for ad-
" hering to a religion, which, for any thing they know,
" may be falſe, or for rejecting another (if that be the
" caſe) which, for any thing they know, may be true,
" till they have brought it to the bar of reaſon, and
" given it fair trial there?—Here you again bring in
" ſuch as prefer a falſe way before a true: to which
" having anſwered already, I ſhall here ſay no more,
" but that, ſince our church will not allow thoſe to be
" in a falſe way who are out of the church of Rome,
" becauſe the church of Rome, which pretends infalli-
" bility,

" bility, declares her's to be the only true way; cer-
" tainly no one of our church, nor any other, which
" claims not infallibility, can require any one to take
" the teſtimony of any church, as a ſufficient proof of
" the truth of her own doctrine. So that true and
" falſe, as it commonly happens, when we ſuppoſe
" them for ourſelves, or our party, in effect, ſignify
" juſt nothing, or nothing to the purpoſe; unleſs we
" can think that true or falſe in England, which will
" not be ſo at Rome or Geneva; and vice verſâ. As
" for the reſt of the deſcription of thoſe, on whom you
" are here laying penalties; I beſeech you conſider
" whether it will not belong to any of your church, let
" it be what it will. Conſider, I ſay, if there be none
" in your church who have embraced her religion upon
" ſuch inducements as ought to have no ſway at all in
" the matter, and therefore with little or no examina-
" tion of the proper grounds of it; who have not been
" inclined by prejudices; who do not adhere to a
" religion which for any thing they know may be falſe;
" and who have rejected another, which for any thing
" they know may be true. If you have any ſuch in
" your communion, and it will be an admirable, though
" I fear but a little flock, that has none ſuch in it,
" conſider well what you have done. You have pre-
" pared rods for them, for which I imagine they will
" con you no thanks. For to make any tolerable ſenſe
" of what you here propoſe, it muſt be underſtood
" that you would have men of all religions puniſhed,
" to make them conſider whether it be really worth the
" while to undergo ſuch inconveniencies for adhering to
" a religion, which for any thing they know may be
" falſe. If you hope to avoid that, by what you have
" ſaid of true and falſe; and pretend that the ſuppoſed
" preference of the true way in your church ought to
" preſerve its members from your puniſhment; you
" manifeſtly trifle. For every church's teſtimony, that
" it has choſen in the true way, muſt be taken for itſelf;
" and then none will be liable; and your new invention
" of puniſhment is come to nothing; or elſe the dif-
" fering churches teſtimonies muſt be taken one for
" another;

" another; and then they will be all out of the true " way, and your church need penalties as well as the " reſt. So that, upon your principles, they muſt all " or none be puniſhed. Chooſe which you pleaſe; one " of them, I think, you cannot eſcape.

" What you ſay in the next words: Where inſtruc- " tion if ſtifly refuſed, and all admonitions and per- " ſuaſions prove vain and ineffectual; differs nothing, " but in the way of expreſſing, from deaf to all per- " ſuaſions: and ſo that is anſwered already.

" In another place, you give us another deſcription " of thoſe you think ought to be puniſhed, in theſe " words: Thoſe who refuſe to embrace the doctrine, " and ſubmit to the ſpiritual goverment of the proper " miniſters of religion, who by ſpecial deſignation are " appointed to exhort, admoniſh, reprove, &c. Here " then, thoſe to be puniſhed, are ſuch who refuſe to " embrace the doctrine, and ſubmit to the government " of the proper miniſters of religion. Whereby we are " as much ſtill at uncertainty as we were before, who " thoſe are who, by your ſcheme, and laws ſuitable to " it, are to be puniſhed; ſince every church has, as it " thinks, its proper miniſters of religion: and if you " mean thoſe that refuſe to embrace the doctrine, and " ſubmit to the government of the miniſters of another " church; then all men will be guilty, and muſt be " puniſhed, even thoſe of your own church as well as " others. If you mean thoſe who refuſe, &c. the mi- " niſters of their own church, very few will incur " your penalties: but if by theſe proper miniſters of " religion, the miniſters of ſome particular church " are intended, why do you not name it? Why " are you ſo reſerved in a matter, wherein, if you " ſpeak not out, all the reſt that you ſay will be to " no purpoſe? Are men to be puniſhed for re- " fuſing to embrace the doctrine, and ſubmit to the " government of the proper miniſters of the church of " Geneva? For this time, ſince you have declared " nothing to the contrary, let me ſuppoſe you of that " church; and then I am ſure, that is it that you would " name: for of whatever church you are, if you think " the miniſters of any one church ought to be

" hark-

" hearkened to, and obeyed, it muſt be thoſe of your
" own. There are perſons to be puniſhed, you ſay;
" this you contend for all through your book, and lay
" ſo much ſtreſs on it, that you make the preſervation
" and propagation of religion, and the ſalvation of
" ſouls, to depend on it: and yet you deſcribe them
" by ſo general and equivocal marks, that, unleſs it be
" upon ſuppoſitions which no-body will grant you, I
" dare ſay, neither you nor any body elſe will be able
" to find one guilty. Pray find me if you can, a man
" whom you can judicially prove, (for he that is to be
" puniſhed by law, muſt be fairly tried) is in a wrong
" way, in reſpect of his faith; I mean, who is deaf to
" all perſuaſions, who flies from all means of a right
" information, who refuſes to embrace the doctrine,
" and ſubmit to the government of the ſpiritual paſ-
" tors. And when you have done that, I think I may
" allow you what power you pleaſe to puniſh him,
" without any prejudice to the toleration the author of
" the letter propoſes.

" But why, I pray, all this boggling, all this looſe
" talking, as if you knew not what you meant, or durſt
" not ſpeak it out? Would you be for puniſhing ſome-
" body, you know not whom? I do not think ſo ill of
" you. Let me then ſpeak out for you. The evidence
" of the argument has convinced you that men ought
" not to be perſecuted for their religion: That the ſe-
" verities in uſe amongſt chriſtians cannot be defend-
" ed: That the magiſtrate has not authority to compel
" any one to his religion. This you are forced to
" yield. But you would fain retain ſome power in the
" magiſtrate's hands to puniſh diſſenters, upon a new
" pretence, viz. not for having embraced the doctrine
" and worſhip they believe to be true and right, but
" for not having well conſidered their own and the ma-
" giſtrate's religion. To ſhow you that I do not ſpeak
" wholly without book, give me leave to mind you of
" one paſſage of yours: the words are,—Penalties to
" put them upon a ſerious and impartial examination
" of the controverſy between the magiſtrates and them.
" —Though theſe words be not intended to tell us who

" you

" you would have punished, yet it may be plainly in-
" ferred from them. And they more clearly point out
" whom you aim at, than all the foregoing places,
" where you seem to, and should, describe them. For
" they are such as between whom and the magistrate
" there is a controversy; that is, in short, who differ
" from the magistrate in religion. And now indeed you
" have given us a note by which these you would have
" punished, may be known. We have, with much ado,
" found at last whom it is we may presume you would
" have punished. Which in other cases is usually not
" very difficult: because there the faults to be amended
" easily design the persons to be corrected. But yours
" is a new method, and unlike all that ever went be-
" fore it.

" In the next place, let us see for what you would
" have them punished. You tell us, and it will easily
" be granted you, that not to examine and weigh im-
" partially, and without prejudice or passion, all which,
" for shortness sake, we will express by this one word
" consider, the religion one embraces or refuses, is a
" fault very common, and very prejudicial to true re-
" ligion, and the salvation of men's souls. But pe-
" nalties and punishments are very necessary, say you,
" to remedy this evil.

" Let us see now how you apply this remedy. There-
" fore, say you, let all dissenters be punished. Why?
" Have no dissenters considered of religion? Or have
" all conformists considered? That you yourself will
" not say. Your project therefore is just as reasonable,
" as if a lethargy growing epidemical in England, you
" should propose to have a law made to blister and
" scarify, and shave the heads of all who wear gowns;
" though it be certain that neither all who wear gowns
" are lethargic, nor all who are lethargic wear gowns:

—— " Dii te, Damasippe, Deæque
" Verum ob consilium donent tonsore.

" For there could not be certainly a more learned ad-
" vice, than that one man should be pulled by the ears,

" because

" becauſe another is aſleep. This, when you have con-
" ſidered of it again, (for I find, according to your
" principle, all men have now and then need to be
" jogged) you will, I gueſs, be convinced is not like
" a fair phyſician, to apply a remedy to a diſeaſe; but,
" like an enraged enemy, to vent one's ſpleen upon a
" party. Common ſenſe, as well as common juſtice,
" requires, that the remedies of laws and penalties
" ſhould be directed againſt the evil that is to be re-
" moved, wherever it be found. And if the puniſh-
" ment you think ſo neceſſary be, as you pretend, to
" cure the miſchief you complain of, you muſt let it
" purſue, and fall on the guilty, and thoſe only, in
" what company ſoever they are; and not, as you here
" propoſe, and is the higheſt injuſtice, puniſh the inno-
" cent conſidering diſſenter, with the guilty; and on the
" other ſide, let the inconſiderate guilty conformiſt eſcape,
" with the innocent. For one may rationally preſume
" that the national church has ſome, nay, more, in pro-
" portion, of thoſe who little conſider or concern them-
" ſelves about religion, than any congregation of diſſen-
" ters. For conſcience, or the care of their ſouls, being
" once laid aſide; intereſt, of courſe, leads men into
" that ſociety, where the protection and countenance of
" the government, and hopes of preferment, bid faireſt
" to all their remaining deſires. So that if careleſs,
" negligent, inconſiderate men in matters of religion,
" who, without being forced, would not conſider, are
" to be rouzed into a care of their ſouls, and a ſearch
" after truth, by puniſhments; the national religion,
" in all countries, will certainly have a right to the
" greateſt ſhare of thoſe puniſhments, at leaſt, not to
" be wholly exempt from them.

" This is that which the author of the letter, as I
" remember, complains of, and that juſtly, viz. That
" the pretended care of men's ſouls always expreſſes
" itſelf, in thoſe who would have force any way made
" uſe of to that end, in very unequal methods; ſome
" perſons being to be treated with ſeverity, whilſt
" others guilty of the ſame faults, are not to be ſo

" much as touched. Though you are got pretty well " out of the deep mud, and renounce punishments di- " rectly for religion; yet you stick still in this part of " the mire; whilst you would have dissenters punished " to make them consider, but would not have any thing " done to conformists, though ever so negligent in this " point of considering. The author's letter pleased " me, because it is equal to all mankind, is direct, and " will, I think, hold every-where; which I take to be " a good mark of truth. For I shall always suspect that " neither to comport with the truth of religion, or the " design of the gospel, which is suited to only some " one country or party. What is true and good in " England, will be true and good at Rome too, in " China or Geneva. But whether your great and only " method for the propagating of truth, by bringing the " inconsiderate by punishments to consider, would, ac- " cording to your way of applying your punishments " only to dissenters from the national religion, be of " use in those countries, or any-where but where you " suppose the magistrate to be in the right; judge you. " Pray, sir, consider a little, whether prejudice has not " some share in your way of arguing, for this is your " position: Men are generally negligent in examining " the grounds of their religion. This I grant. But " could there be a more wild and incoherent conse- " quence drawn from it, than this; therefore dissenters " must be punished?"—

All this you are pleased to pass over without the least notice: but perhaps you think you have made me full satisfaction in your answer to my demand, who are to be punished? We will here therefore consider that as it stands, where you tell us, " Those who are to be pu- " nished according to the whole tenour of your answer, " are no other but such, as having sufficient evidence " tendered them of the true religion, do yet reject it: " whether utterly refusing to consider that evidence, or " not considering as they ought, viz. with such care " and diligence as the matter deserves and requires, " and with honest and unbiassed minds; and what dif- " ficulty there is in this, you say, you cannot imagine."

You

You promiſed you would tell the world who they were, plainly and directly. And though you tell us, you cannot imagine what difficulty there is in this your account of who are to be puniſhed, yet there are ſome things in it, that make it to my apprehenſion not very plain and direct. For firſt they muſt be only thoſe who have the true religion tendered them with ſufficient evidence; wherein there appears ſome difficulty to me, who ſhall be judge what is the true religion: and for that, in every country it is moſt probable the magiſtrate will be. If you think of any other, pray tell us. Next there ſeems ſome difficulty to know, who ſhall be judge what is ſufficient evidence. For where a man is to be puniſhed by law, he muſt be convicted of being guilty; which ſince in this caſe he cannot be, unleſs it be proved he has had the true religion tendered to him with ſufficient evidence, it is neceſſary that ſome-body there muſt be judge what is the true religion, and what is ſufficient evidence; and others to prove it has been ſo tendered. If you were to be of the jury, we know what would be your verdict concerning ſufficient evidence, by theſe words of yours, "To ſay that a man who has the true "religion propoſed to him with ſufficient evidence of "its truth, may conſider it as he ought, or do his ut-"moſt in conſidering, and yet not perceive the truth "of it, is neither more nor leſs, than to ſay that ſuffi-"cient evidence is not ſufficient: for what does any "man mean by ſufficient evidence, but ſuch as will "certainly win aſſent wherever it is duly conſidered?" Upon which his conforming, or not conforming, would without any farther queſtions determine the point. But whether the reſt of the jury could upon this be able ever to bring in any man guilty, and ſo liable to puniſhment, is a queſtion. For if ſufficient evidence be only that which certainly wins aſſent, wherever a man does his utmoſt in conſidering; it will be very hard to prove that a man who rejects the true religion has had it tendered with ſufficient evidence, becauſe it will be very hard to prove he has not done his utmoſt in conſidering it. So that, notwithſtanding all you have here ſaid, to

puniſh any man by your method is not yet ſo very practicable.

But you clear all in your following words, which ſay, " there is nothing more evident than that thoſe who " reject the true religion, are culpable, and deſerve to " be puniſhed." By whom? By men: that is ſo far from being evident, as you talk, that it will require better proofs than I have yet ſeen for it. Next you ſay, " It is eaſy enough to know when men reject the true " religion." Yes, when the true religion is known, and agreed on what ſhall be taken to be ſo in judicial proceedings, which can ſcarce be till it is agreed who ſhall determine what is true religion, and what not. Suppoſe a penalty ſhould in the univerſity be laid on thoſe who rejected the true peripatetic doctrine, could that law be executed on any one, unleſs it were agreed who ſhould be judge what was the true peripatetic doctrine? If you ſay it may be known out of Ariſtotle's writings: then I anſwer, that it would be a more reaſonable law to lay the penalty on any one, who rejected the doctrine contained in the books allowed to be Ariſtotle's, and printed under his name. You may apply this to the true religion, and the books of the ſcripture, if you pleaſe: though, after all, there muſt be a judge agreed on, to determine what doctrines are contained in either of thoſe writings, before the law can be practicable.

But you go on to prove, that " it is eaſy to know " when men reject the true religion: for, ſay you, that " requires no more than that we know that that reli- " gion was tendered to them with ſufficient evidence of " the truth of it. And that it may be tendered to men " with ſuch evidence, and that it may be known when " it is ſo tendered, theſe things, you ſay, you take leave " here to ſuppoſe." You ſuppoſe then more than can be allowed you. For that it can be judicially known that the true religion has been tendered to any one with ſufficient evidence, is what I deny, and that for reaſons above-mentioned, which, were there no other difficulty in it, were ſufficient to ſhow the impracticableneſs of your method.

You

You conclude this paragraph thus, " which is all " that needs be ſaid upon this head to ſhow the con- " ſiſtency and practicableneſs of this method: and what " do you any where ſay againſt this?" Whether I ſay any thing or no againſt it, I will bring a friend of yours that will ſay that diſſenters ought to be puniſhed for being out of the communion of the church of England. I will aſk you now, how it can be proved that ſuch an one is guilty of rejecting the one only true religion? Perhaps it is becauſe he ſcruples the croſs in baptiſm, or godfathers and godmothers as they are uſed, or kneeling at the Lord's Supper; perhaps it is becauſe he cannot pronounce all damned that believe not all Athanaſius's Creed; or cannot join with ſome of thoſe repetitions in our Common-prayer; thinking them to come within the prohibition of our Saviour; each of which ſhuts a man out from the communion of the church of England, as much as if he denied Jeſus Chriſt to be the Son of God. Now, ſir, I beſeech you, how can it be known, that ever ſufficient evidence was tendered to ſuch a diſſenter to prove, that what he rejects is a part of that one only true religion, which unleſs he be of, he cannot be ſaved? Or indeed how can it be known, that any diſſenter rejects that one only true religion, when being puniſhed barely for not conforming, he is never aſked, what part it is he diſſents from or rejects? And ſo it may be ſome of thoſe things which I imagine will always want ſufficient evidence to prove them to be parts of that only one true religion, without the hearty embracing whereof no man can be ſaved.

CHAPTER IV.

What degrees of puniſhment.

HOW much ſoever you have endeavoured to reform the doctrine of perſecution to make it ſerve your turn, and give it the colour of care and zeal for the true religion in the country where alone you are concerned it ſhould be made uſe of; yet you have laboured in vain, and done no more, but given the old engine a new varniſh to ſet it off the better, and make it look leſs frightful: for, by what has been ſaid in the foregoing chapters, I think it will appear, that if any magiſtrate have power to puniſh men in matters of religion, all have; and that diſſenters from the national religion muſt be puniſhed every-where or no-where. The horrid cruelties that in all ages, and of late in our view, have been committed under the name, and upon the account of religion, give ſo juſt an offence and abhorrence to all who have any remains, not only of religion, but humanity left, that the world is aſhamed to own it. This objection therefore, as much as words or profeſſions can do, you have laboured to fence againſt; and to exempt your deſign from the ſuſpicion of any ſeverities, you take care in every page almoſt to let us hear of moderate force, moderate penalties; but all in vain: and I doubt not but when this part too is examined, it will appear, that as you neither have, nor can limit the power of puniſhing to any diſtinct ſort of magiſtrates, nor exempt from puniſhment the diſſenters from any national religion: ſo neither have, nor can you, limit the puniſhment to any degree ſhort of the higheſt, if you will uſe puniſhments at all in matters of religion. What you have done in this point beſides giving us good words, I will now examine.

You tell me, "I have taken a liberty which will need "pardon," becauſe I ſay, "You have plainly yielded "the

" the queſtion by owning thoſe greater ſeverities to be " improper and unfit." But if I ſhall make it out, that thoſe are as proper and fit as your moderate penalties; and that if you will uſe one, you muſt come to the other, as will appear from what you yourſelf ſay; whatever you may think, I ſhall not imagine other readers will conclude I have taken too great liberty, or ſhall much need pardon. For if, as you ſay in the next page, " authority may reaſonably and juſtly uſe ſome " degrees of force where it is needful;" I ſay they may alſo uſe any degree of force where it is needful. Now upon your grounds, fire and ſword, tormenting and undoing, and thoſe other puniſhments which you condemn, will be needful, even to torments of the higheſt ſeverity, and be as neceſſary as thoſe moderate penalties which you will not name. For I aſk you, to what purpoſe do you uſe any degrees of force? Is it to prevail with men to do ſomething that is in their power, or that is not? The latter I ſuppoſe you will not ſay, till your love of force is ſo increaſed, that you ſhall think it neceſſary to be made uſe of to produce impoſſibilities: if force then be to be uſed only to bring men to do what is in their power, what is the neceſſity you aſſign of it? only this, as I remember, viz. That " when " gentle admonitions and earneſt intreaties will not pre- " vail, what other means is there left but force?" And I upon the ſame ground reply: If leſſer degrees of force will not prevail, what other means is there left but greater? If the loweſt degree of force be neceſſary where gentler means will not prevail, becauſe there is no other means left; higher degrees of force are neceſſary, where lower will not prevail, for the ſame reaſon. Unleſs you will ſay all degrees of force work alike; and that lower penalties prevail as much on men as greater, and will equally bring them to do what is in their power. If ſo, a philip on the forehead, or a farthing mulct, may be penalty enough to bring men to what you propoſe. But if you ſhall laugh at theſe, as being for their ſmallneſs inſufficient, and therefore will think it neceſſary to increaſe them; I ſay, wherever experience ſhows any degree of force to be inſufficient to prevail, there

will be ſtill the ſame neceſſity to increaſe it. For wherever the end is neceſſary, and force is the means, the only means left to procure it, both which you ſuppoſe in our caſe; there it will be found always neceſſary to increaſe the degrees of force, where the lower prove ineffectual, as well till you come to the higheſt as when you begin with the loweſt. So that in your preſent caſe I do not wonder you uſe ſo many ſhifts, as I ſhall ſhow by and by you do, to decline naming the higheſt degree of what you call moderate. If any degree be neceſſary, you cannot aſſign any one, condemn it in words as much as you pleaſe, which may not be ſo, and which you muſt not come to the uſe of. If there be no ſuch neceſſity of force as will juſtify thoſe higher degrees of it, which are ſeverities you condemn; neither will it juſtify the uſe of your lower degrees.

If, as you tell us, "falſe religions prevail againſt the "true, merely by the advantage they have in the cor-"ruption and pravity of human nature left to itſelf un-"bridled by authority;" if the not receiving the true religion be a mark and effect merely of the prevalency of the corruption of human nature; may not, nay, muſt not the magiſtrate, if leſs will not do, uſe his utmoſt force to bring men to the true religion? his force being given him to ſuppreſs that corruption; eſpecially ſince you give it for a meaſure of the force to be uſed, that it muſt be "ſo much, as without which ordinarily "they will not embrace the truth that muſt ſave them." What ordinarily ſignifies here to make any determinate meaſure, is hard to gueſs; but ſignify it what it will, ſo much force muſt be uſed, as "without which men "will not embrace the truth;" which, if it ſignify any thing intelligible, requires, that where lower degrees will not do, greater muſt be uſed, till you come to what will ordinarily do; but what that ordinarily is, no man can tell. If one man will not be wrought on by as little force as another, muſt not greater degrees of force be uſed to him? Shall the magiſtrate who is obliged to do what lies in him, be excuſed, for letting him be damned, without the uſe of all the means that were in his power? And will it be ſufficient for him to plead, that

that though he did not all that lay in him, yet he did what ordinarily prevailed, or what prevailed on ſeveral others? Force, if that be the remedy, muſt be proportioned to the oppoſition. If the doſe that has frequently wrought on others, will not purge a man whoſe life lies on it; muſt it not therefore be made ſufficient and effectual, becauſe it will be more than what is called ordinary? Or can any one ſay the phyſician has done his duty, who lets his patient in an extraordinary caſe periſh in the uſe of only moderate remedies, and pronounces him incurable, before he has tried the utmoſt he can with the powerfulleſt remedies which are in his reach?

Having renounced loſs of eſtate, corporal puniſhments, impriſonment, and ſuch ſort of ſeverities, as unfit to be uſed in matters of religion; you aſk, "Will it follow from hence that the magiſtrate has no "right to uſe any force at all?" Yes, it will follow, till you give ſome anſwer to what I ſay in that place, viz. "That if you give up puniſhments of a man in "his perſon, liberty, and eſtate, I think we need not "ſtand with you for any puniſhments may be made uſe "of." But this you paſs by without any notice. I doubt not but you will here think you have a ready anſwer, by telling me, you mean only "depriving men "of their eſtates, maiming them with corporal puniſh-"ments, ſtarving and tormenting them in noiſome pri-"ſons," and other ſuch ſeverities which you have by name excepted; but lower penalties may yet be uſed: for penalties is the word you carefully uſe, and diſclaim that of puniſhment, as if you diſowned the thing. I wiſh you would tell us too by name what thoſe lower penalties are you would have uſed, as well as by name you tell us thoſe ſeverities you diſallow. They may not maim a man with corporal puniſhments; may they uſe any corporal puniſhments at all? They may not ſtarve and torment them in noiſome priſons for religion; that you condemn as much as I. May they put them in any priſon at all? They may not deprive men of their eſtates: I ſuppoſe you mean their whole eſtates: May they take away half, or a quarter, or an hundredth part? It is ſtrange you ſhould be able to name the degrees of

ſeverity

ſeverity that will hinder more than promote the progreſs of religion, and cannot name thoſe degrees that will promote rather than hinder it; that thoſe who would take their meaſures by you, and follow your ſcheme, might know how to proceed ſo, as not to do more harm than good: for ſince you are ſo certain, that there are degrees of puniſhments or penalties that will do good, and other degrees of them that will do harm; ought you not to have told us, what that true degree is, or how it may be known, without which all your goodly ſcheme is of no uſe? For allowing all you have ſaid to be as true as you would have it, no good can be done without ſhowing the juſt meaſure of puniſhment to be uſed.

If the degree be too great, it will, you confeſs, do harm: can one then not err on the other hand, by uſing too little? If you ſay ſo, we are agreed, and I deſire no better toleration. If therefore too great will do harm, and too little, in your opinion, will do no good; you ought to tell us the juſt mean. This I preſſed upon you; whereof that the reader may be judge, I ſhall here trouble him with the repetition:

" There is a third thing, that you are as tender and " reſerved in, as either naming the criminals to be pu- " niſhed, or poſitively telling us the end for which they " ſhould be puniſhed; and that is, with what ſort of " penalties, what degree of puniſhment, they ſhould " be forced. You are indeed ſo gracious to them, that " you renounce the ſeverities and penalties hitherto " made uſe of. You tell us, they ſhould be but mode- " rate penalties. But if we aſk you what are moderate " penalties, you confeſs you cannot tell us: ſo that by " moderate here, you yet mean nothing. You tell us, " the outward force to be applied, ſhould be duly tem- " pered. But what that due temper is, you do not, " or cannot ſay; and ſo, in effect, it ſignifies juſt no- " thing. Yet if in this you are not plain and direct, " all the reſt of your deſign will ſignify nothing. For " it being to have ſome men, and to ſome end puniſh- " ed; yet if it cannot be found what puniſhment is to " be uſed, it is, notwithſtanding all you have ſaid, ut-

" terly

" terly uſeleſs. You tell us modeſtly, That to deter-
" mine preciſely the juſt meaſure of the puniſhment,
" will require ſome conſideration. If the faults were
" preciſely determined, and could be proved, it would
" require no more conſideration to determine the mea-
" ſure of the puniſhment in this, than it would in any
" other caſe, where thoſe were known. But where the
" fault is undefined, and the guilt not to be proved,
" as I ſuppoſe it will be found in this preſent buſineſs
" of examining; it will without doubt require conſide-
" ration to proportion the force to the deſign: juſt
" ſo much conſideration as it will require to fit a coat
" to the moon, or proportion a ſhoe to the feet of thoſe
" who inhabit her. For to proportion a puniſhment
" to a fault that you do not name, and ſo we in charity
" ought to think you do not yet know, and a fault that
" when you have named it, it will be impoſſible to be
" proved who are or are not guilty of it, will, I ſup-
" poſe, require as much conſideration as to fit a ſhoe to
" feet whoſe ſize and ſhape are not known.

" However, you offer ſome meaſures whereby to re-
" gulate your puniſhments; which when they are looked
" into, will be found to be juſt as good as none, they
" being impoſſible to be any rule in the caſe. The firſt
" is, So much force, or ſuch penalties as are ordinarily
" ſufficient to prevail with men of common diſcretion,
" and not deſperately perverſe and obſtinate, to weigh
" matters of religion carefully and impartially, and
" without which ordinarily they will not do this. Where
" it is to be obſerved:

" Firſt, That who are theſe men of common diſcre-
" tion, is as hard to know, as to know what is a fit
" degree of puniſhment in the caſe; and ſo you do but
" regulate one uncertainty by another. Some men will
" be apt to think, that he who will not weigh mat-
" ters of religion, which are of infinite concernment
" to him, without puniſhment, cannot in reaſon be
" thought a man of common diſcretion. Many wo-
" men of common diſcretion enough to manage the or-
" dinary affairs of their families, are not able to read
" a page in an ordinary author, or to underſtand and

" give

" give an account what it means, when read to them.
" Many men of common diſcretion in their callings,
" are not able to judge when an argument is conclu-
" ſive or no; much leſs to trace it through a long train
" of conſequences. What penalties ſhall be ſufficient
" to prevail with ſuch, who upon examination, I fear,
" will not be found to make the leaſt part of mankind,
" to examine and weigh matters of religion carefully
" and impartially? The law allows all to have common
" diſcretion, for whom it has not provided guardians
" or Bedlam. So that, in effect, your men of common
" diſcretion, are all men, not judged idiots or mad-
" men: and penalties ſufficient to prevail with men of
" common diſcretion, are penalties ſufficient to pre-
" vail with all men but idiots and madmen; which what
" a meaſure it is to regulate penalties by, let all men
" of common diſcretion judge.

" Secondly, You may be pleaſed to conſider, that all
" men of the ſame degree of diſcretion, are not apt to
" be moved by the ſame degree of penalties. Some are
" of a more yielding, ſome of a more ſtiff temper; and
" what is ſufficient to prevail on one, is not half enough
" to move the other; though both men of common diſ-
" cretion. So that common diſcretion will be here of
" no uſe to determine the meaſure of puniſhment: eſ-
" pecially, when in the ſame clauſe you except men
" deſperately perverſe and obſtinate; who are as hard
" to be known, as what you ſeek, viz. the juſt propor-
" tions of puniſhments neceſſary to prevail with men
" to conſider, examine, and weigh matters of religion:
" wherein, if a man tells you he has conſidered, he has
" weighed, he has examined, and ſo goes on in his for-
" mer courſe, it is impoſſible for you ever to know
" whether he has done his duty, or whether he be deſ-
" perately perverſe and obſtinate. So that this excep-
" tion ſignifies juſt nothing.

" There are many things in your uſe of force and pe-
" nalties, different from any I ever met with elſewhere.
" One of them, this clauſe of yours concerning the
" meaſure of puniſhments, now under conſideration,
" offers me: wherein you proportion your puniſhments

" only

" only to the yielding and corrigible, not to the per-
" verſe and obſtinate; contrary to the common diſ-
" cretion which has hitherto made laws in other caſes,
" which levels the puniſhments againſt refractory offen-
" ders, and never ſpares them becauſe they are obſtinate.
" This however I will not blame as an overſight in
" you. Your new method, which aims at ſuch im-
" practicable and inconſiſtent things as laws cannot
" bear, nor penalties be uſeful to, forced you to it.
" The uſeleſsneſs, abſurdity, and unreaſonableneſs of
" great ſeverities, you had acknowledged in the fore-
" going paragraphs: Diſſenters you would have brought
" to conſider by moderate penalties. They lie under
" them; but whether they have conſidered or no, for
" that you cannot tell, they ſtill continue diſſenters.
" What is to be done now? Why, the incurable are to
" be left to God, as you tell us. Your puniſhments
" were not meant to prevail on the deſperately perverſe
" and obſtinate, as you tell us here. And ſo what-
" ever be the ſucceſs, your puniſhments are however
" juſtified."

The fullneſs of your anſwer to my queſtion, " With
" what puniſhments?" made you poſſibly paſs by theſe two or three pages without making any particular reply to any thing I ſaid in them: we will therefore examine that anſwer of yours, where you tell us, " That having
" in your anſwer declared that you take the ſeverities
" ſo often mentioned (which either deſtroy men, or
" make them miſerable) to be utterly unapt and im-
" proper (for reaſons there given) to bring men to em-
" brace the truth that muſt ſave them: but juſt how
" far within thoſe bounds that force extends itſelf,
" which is really ſerviceable to that end, you do not
" preſume to determine." To determine how far moderate force reaches, when it is neceſſary to your buſineſs that it ſhould be determined, is not preſuming: you might with more reaſon have called it preſuming to talk of moderate penalties, and not to be able to determine what you mean by them; or to promiſe, as you do, that you will tell plainly and directly, with what puniſhments; and here to tell us, you do not preſume to deter-

determine. But you give a reaſon for this modeſty of yours, in what follows, where you tell me, I have not ſhown any cauſe why you ſhould. And yet you may find, in what is above repeated to you, theſe words, " If in " this you are not plain and direct, all the reſt of your " deſign will ſignify nothing." But had I failed in ſhowing any cauſe why you ſhould; and your charity would not enlighten us, unleſs driven by my reaſons; I dare ſay yet, if I have not ſhown any cauſe why you ſhould determine in this point, I can ſhow a cauſe why you ſhould not. For I will be anſwerable to you, that you cannot name any degree of puniſhment, which will not be either ſo great, as to come among thoſe you condemn, and ſhow what your moderation, what your averſion to perſecution is; or elſe too little to attain thoſe ends for which you propoſe it. But whatever you tell me, that I have ſhown no cauſe why you ſhould determine, I thought it might have paſſed for a cauſe why you ſhould determine more particularly, that, as you will find in thoſe pages, I had proved that the meaſures you offer, whereby to regulate your puniſhments, are juſt as good as none.

Your meaſures in your " argument conſidered," and which you repeat here again, are in theſe words: " ſo " much force, or ſuch penalties as are ordinarily ſuffi- " cient to prevail with men of common diſcretion, and " not deſperately perverſe, to weigh matters of religion " carefully and impartially, and without which or- " dinarily they will not do this; ſo much force, or " ſuch penalties may fitly and reaſonably be uſed for the " promoting true religion in the world, and the ſalva- " tion of ſouls. And what juſt exception this is liable " to, you do not underſtand." Some of the exceptions it is liable to, you might have ſeen in what I have here again cauſed to be reprinted, if you had thought them worth your notice. But you go on to tell us here, " that when you ſpeak of men of common diſcretion, " and not deſperately perverſe and obſtinate, you think " it is plain enough, that by common diſcretion " you exclude not idiots only, and ſuch as we uſually " call madmen, but likewiſe the deſperately perverſe " and

" and obſtinate, who perhaps may well enough de-
" ſerve that name, though they be not wont to be ſent
" to Bedlam."

Whether by this you have at all taken off the difficulty, and ſhown your meaſure to be any at all in the uſe of force, I leave the reader to judge. I aſked, ſince great ones are unfit, what degrees of puniſhment or force are to be uſed? You anſwer, " So much force,
" and ſuch penalties as are ordinarily ſufficient to pre-
" vail with men of ordinary diſcretion." I tell you it is as hard to know who thoſe men of common diſcretion are, as what degree of puniſhment you would have uſed; unleſs we will take the " determination of the
" law, which allows all to have common diſcretion, for
" whom it has not provided guardians or Bedlam:"
ſo that in effect, your men of common diſcretion are all men not judged idiots or madmen. To clear this, you tell us, " when you ſpeak of men of common diſcretion,
" and not deſperately perverſe and obſtinate, you think
" it is plain enough, by common diſcretion you exclude
" not idiots only, and ſuch as are uſually called madmen,
" but likewiſe the deſperately perverſe and obſtinate."
It may be you did, for you beſt know what you meant in writing: but if by men of common diſcretion, you excluded the deſperately perverſe and obſtinate, let us put what you meant by the words, men of common diſcretion, in the place of thoſe words themſelves, and then, according to your meaning, your rule ſtands thus: penalties ordinarily ſufficient to prevail with men not deſperately perverſe and obſtinate, and with men not deſperately perverſe and obſtinate: ſo that at laſt, by men of common diſcretion, either you excluded only idiots and madmen; or if we muſt take your word for it, that by them you excluded likewiſe the deſperately perverſe and obſtinate, and ſo meant ſomething elſe; it is plain, you meant only a very uſeleſs and inſignificant tautology.

You go on, and tell us, " If the penalties you ſpeak
" of, be intended for the curing men's unreaſonable
" prejudices and refractorineſs againſt the true religion,
" then the reaſon why the deſperately perverſe and ob-
" ſtinate

" ſtinate are not to be regarded in meaſuring theſe " penalties, is very apparent. For as remedies are not " provided for the incurable, ſo in the preparing and " tempering them, regard is to be had only to thoſe for " whom they are deſigned." Which, true or falſe, is nothing to the purpoſe, in a place where you profeſs to inform us, what puniſhments are to be uſed. We are inquiring who are the deſperately perverſe and obſtinate, and not whether they are to be puniſhed or no. You pretend to give us a rule to know what degrees of force are to be uſed, and tell us, " it is ſo much as is ordinarily ſuffi- " cient to prevail with men of common diſcretion, and " not deſperately perverſe and obſtinate." We again aſk, who are your men of common diſcretion? You tell us, " ſuch as are not madmen or idiots, or deſperately " perverſe and obſtinate." Very well, but who are thoſe deſperately perverſe and obſtinate, how ſhall we know them? and to this you tell us, " they are not to be " regarded in meaſuring theſe penalties." Whereby certainly we have got a plain meaſure of your moderate penalties. No, not yet; you go on in your next paragraph to perfect it, where you ſay, " To prevent a little " cavil, it may be needful to note that there are degrees " of perverſeneſs and obſtinacy, and that men may be " perverſe and obſtinate without being deſperately ſo." So then now we have your meaſure complete; and to determine the juſt degrees of puniſhments, and to clear up the doubt, who are the deſperately perverſe and obſtinate, we need but be told that " there are degrees " of perverſeneſs and obſtinacy;" and that men may be perverſe and obſtinate without being deſperately ſo: and that therefore " ſome perverſe and obſtinate perſons may " be thought curable, though ſuch as are deſperately ſo, " cannot." But does all this tell us who are the deſperately perverſe and obſtinate? which is the thing we want to be informed in; nor till you have told us that, have you removed the objection.

But if by deſperately perverſe and obſtinate, you will tell us, you meant thoſe, that are not wrought upon by your moderate penalties, as you ſeem to intimate in your reaſon why the deſperately perverſe and obſtinate

are not to be regarded in measuring these penalties: "for, say you, as remedies are not provided for the "incurable; so in preparing and tempering them, "regard is to be had only to those for whom they are "designed." So that by the desperately perverse and obstinate, you will perhaps say, it was plain you meant the incurable; for you ordinarily shift off the doubtfulness of one place, by appealing to as doubtful an expression in another. If you say then, that by desperately perverse and obstinate, you mean incurable; I ask you again by what incurable? by your lower degrees of force? For I hope where force is proper to work, those who are not wrought on by lower degrees, may yet be by higher. If you mean so, then your answer will amount to thus much: moderate penalties are such as are sufficient to prevail on those who are not desperately perverse and obstinate. The desperately perverse and obstinate are those who are incurable; and the incurable are those on whom moderate penalties are not sufficient to prevail: whereby at last we have got a sure measure of what are moderate penalties; just such an one, as if having a sovereign universal medicine put into your hand, which will never fail if you can hit the right dose, which the inventor tells you must be moderate: you should ask him what was the moderate quantity it is to be given in; and he should answer, in such a quantity as was ordinarily sufficient to work on common constitutions, and not desperately perverse and obstinate. And to your asking again, who were of desperately perverse and obstinate constitutions? It should be answered, those that were incurable. And who were incurable? Those whom a moderate quantity would not work on. And thus to your satisfaction, you know the moderate dose by the desperately perverse and obstinate; and the desperately perverse and obstinate by being incurable; and the incurable by the moderate dose. For if, as you say, remedies are not provided for the incurable, and none but moderate penalties are to be provided, is it not plain, that you mean, that all that will not be wrought on by your moderate penalties, are in your sense incurable?

To eaſe you, ſir, of juſtifying yourſelf, and ſhowing that I have miſtaken you, do but tell us poſitively what in penalties is the higheſt degree of moderate; who are deſperately perverſe and obſtinate; or who are incurable; without this relative and circular way of defining one by the other; and I will yield myſelf to have miſtaken you, as much as you pleaſe.

If by incurable you mean ſuch as no penalties, no puniſhments, no force is ſufficient to work on; then your meaſure of moderate penalties will be this, that they are ſuch as are ſufficient to prevail with men not incurable, i. e. who cannot be prevailed on by any puniſhments, any force whatſoever; which will be a meaſure of moderate puniſhments, which (whatſoever you do) ſome will be very apt to approve of.

But let us ſuppoſe by theſe marks, ſince you will afford us no better, that we can find who are deſperately perverſe and obſtinate, we are yet as far as ever from finding the meaſures of your moderate puniſhments, till it can be known, what degree of force it is, that is ordinarily ſufficient to prevail with all that are men of common diſcretion, and not deſperately perverſe and obſtinate; for you are told, that all men of the ſame degree of diſcretion are not apt to be moved with the ſame degree of penalties: but to this too you anſwer nothing, and ſo we are ſtill without any rule or means of knowing how to adjuſt your puniſhments, that being ordinarily ſufficient to prevail upon one, the double whereof is not ordinarily ſufficient to prevail on another.

I tell you in the ſame place, "that you have given "us in another place, ſomething like another boundary "to your moderate penalties: but when examined, it "proves juſt like the reſt, amuſing us only with good "words, ſo put together as to have no direct meaning; "an art very much in uſe amongſt ſome ſort of learned "men: the words are theſe: ſuch penalties as may not "tempt perſons who have any concern for their eternal "ſalvation (and thoſe who have none, ought not to be "conſidered) to renounce a religion which they believe "to be true, or profeſs one which they do not believe "to be ſo. If by any concern, you mean ſuch as men

"ought

" ought to have for their eternal ſalvation; by this rule " you may make your puniſhments as great as you " pleaſe; and all the ſeverities you have diſclaimed " may be brought in play again: for none of thoſe " will be able to make a man, who is truly concerned " for his eternal ſalvation, renounce a religion he be- " lieves to be true, or profeſs one he does not believe to " be ſo. If by thoſe who have any concern, you mean " ſuch, who have ſome faint wiſhes for happineſs here- " after, and would be glad to have things go well with " them in the other world, but will venture nothing in " this world for it; theſe the moderateſt puniſhments " you can imagine will make to change their religion. " If by any concern, you mean whatever may be " between theſe two; the degrees are ſo infinite, that " to proportion your puniſhments by that, is to have " no meaſure of them at all." To which all the reply I can find is only this, " that there are degrees of care- " leſſneſs in men of their ſalvation, as well as of con- " cern for it. So that ſuch as have ſome concern for " their ſalvation, may yet be careleſs of it to a great " degree. And therefore if thoſe who have any concern " for their ſalvation, deſerve regard and pity; then ſo " may ſome careleſs perſons: though thoſe who have " no concern for their ſalvation, deſerve not to be " conſidered, which ſpoils a little harangue you give " us," P. 382. If you think this to be an anſwer to what I ſaid, or that it can ſatisfy one concerning the way of knowing what degrees of puniſhment are to be uſed, pray tell us ſo. The inquiry is " what degrees " of puniſhment will tempt a man, who has any con- " cern for his eternal ſalvation, to renounce a religion " he believes to be true?" And it is anſwered, " There " are degrees of careleſſneſs in men of their ſalvation, " as well as concern for it." A happy diſcovery: what is the uſe of it? " So that ſuch as have ſome con- " cern for their ſalvation, may yet be careleſs of it to " a great degree." Very true: by this we may know what degree of force is to be uſed. No, not a word of that, but the inference is, " and therefore if thoſe who " have any concern for their ſalvation, deſerve regard

" and pity, then ſo may ſome careleſs perſons; though " thoſe who have no concern for their ſalvation, deſerve " not to be conſidered." And by this time we know what degree of force will make a man, who has any concern for his ſalvation, renounce a religion he believes true, and profeſs one he does not believe to be ſo. This might do well at croſs queſtions: but you are ſatisfied with what you have done, and what that is, you tell me in the next words, " which ſpoils a little harangue of " yours given us," P. 382. The harangue I ſuppoſe is contained in theſe words:

" One thing I cannot but take notice of in this paſ- " ſage before I leave it: and that is that you ſay here, " thoſe who have no concern for their ſalvation, deſerve " not to be conſidered. In other parts of your letter " you pretend to have compaſſion on the careleſs, and " provide remedies for them: but here of a ſudden " your charity fails you, and you give them up to " eternal perdition, without the leaſt regard, the leaſt " pity, and ſay, they deſerve not to be conſidered. " Our Saviour's rule was, the ſick and not the whole " need a phyſician: your rule here is, thoſe that are " careleſs, are not to be conſidered, but are to be left " to themſelves. This would ſeem ſtrange, if one did " not obſerve what drew you to it. You perceived that " if the magiſtrate was to uſe no puniſhments, but " ſuch as would make no-body change their religion, " he was to uſe none at all: for the careleſs would be " brought to the national church with any ſlight puniſh- " ments; and when they are once there, you are it " ſeems ſatisfied, and look no farther after them. So " that by your own meaſures, if the careleſs, and thoſe " who have no concern for their eternal ſalvation, are " to be regarded and taken care of, if the ſalvation of " their ſouls is to be promoted, there are to be no " puniſhments to be uſed at all: and therefore you " leave them out as not to be conſidered."

What you have ſaid is ſo far from ſpoiling that harangue, as you are pleaſed to call it, that you having nothing elſe to ſay to it, allow what is laid to your charge in it.

You

You wind up all concerning the measures of your force in these words: "And as those medicines are "thought safe and advisable, which do ordinarily cure, "though not always (as none do;) so those penalties or "punishments, which are ordinarily found sufficient "(as well as necessary) for the ends for which they are "designed, may fitly and reasonably be used for the "compassing these ends." Here your ordinarily comes to your help again; and here one would think that you meant such as cure sometimes, not always; some, though not all: and in this sense will not the utmost severities come within your rule? For can you say, if punishments are to be used to prevail on any, that the greater will, where lower fail, prevail on none? At least can you be sure of it till they have been tried for the compassing these ends? which, as we shall see in another place, you have assigned various enough. I shall only take notice of two or three often repeated by you, and those are to make men hear, to make men consider, to make men consider as they ought, i. e. as you explain it, to make men consider so, as not to reject. The greatness of the force then according to this measure, must be sufficient to make men hear, sufficient to make men consider, and sufficient to make men embrace the true religion.

And now the magistrate has all your rules about the measures of punishments to be used, and may confidently and safely, go to work to establish it by a law: for he having these marks to guide him, that they must be great enough ordinarily to prevail with those who are not idiots or madmen, nor desperately perverse and obstinate; great enough ordinarily to prevail with men to hear, consider, and embrace the true religion, and yet not so great as might tempt persons, who have any concern for their eternal salvation, to renounce a religion which they believe to be true, or profess one which they do not believe to be so: do you not think you have sufficiently instructed him in your meaning, and enabled him to find the just temper of his punishments according to your scheme, neither too much, nor too little? But however you may be satisfied with them, I suppose

others, when it comes to be put in practice, will by these measures, which are all I can find in your scheme, be scarce able to find, what are the punishments you would have used.

In Eutopia there is a medicine called hiera picra, which it is supposed would cure a troublesome disease of that country: but it is not to be given, but in the dose prescribed by the law, and in adjusting the dose lies all the skill: for, if you give too much, it heightens the distemper, and spreads the mortal contagion; and if too little, it does no good at all. With this difficulty the law-makers have been perplexed these many ages, and could not light on the right dose, that would work the cure, till lately there came an undertaker, who would show them how they could not mistake. He bid them then prescribe so much, as would ordinarily be effectual upon all that were not idiots or madmen, or in whom the humour was not desperately perverse and obstinate, to produce the end for which it was designed; but not so much as would make a man in health, who had any concern for his life, fall into a mortal disease. These were good words, and he was rewarded for them: but when by them they came to fix the dose, they could not tell whether it ought to be a grain, a dram, or an ounce, or an whole pound, any more than before; and so the dose of their hiera picra, notwithstanding this gentleman's pains, is as uncertain, and that sovereign remedy as useless as ever it was.

In the next paragraph you tell us, "You do not see "what more can be required to justify the rule here "given." So quick a sight needs no spectacles. "For "if I demand that it should express what penalties "particularly are such as it says may fitly and reasonably "be used; this I must give you leave to tell me is a very "unreasonable demand." It is an unreasonable demand, if your rule be such, that by it I may know without any more ado the particular penalties that are fit; otherwise it is not unreasonable to demand them by name, if your marks be not sufficient to know them by. But let us hear your reason, "For what rule is there "that expresses the particulars that agree with it?"

And

And it is an admirable rule with which one can find no particulars that agree; for I challenge you to inſtance in one: "a rule, you ſay, is intended for a common "meaſure by which particulars are to be examined, "and therefore muſt neceſſarily be general." So general, looſe, and inconſiſtent, that no particulars can be examined by it: for again I challenge you, or any man living, to meaſure out any puniſhment by this your common meaſure, and eſtabliſh it by a law. You go on: "And thoſe to whom it is given are ſuppoſed to "be able to apply it, and to judge of particulars by it. "Nay it is often ſeen that they are better able to do this "than thoſe who give it: and ſo it is in the preſent "caſe; the rule hereby laid down is that by which you "ſuppoſe governors and law-givers ought to examine "the penalties they uſe for the promoting the true reli-"gion, and the ſalvation of ſouls." Such a rule it ought to be I grant, and ſuch an one is deſired: but that yours is ſuch a rule as magiſtrates can take any meaſure by, for the puniſhments they are to ſettle by law, is denied, and you are again deſired to ſhow. You proceed: "But certainly no man doubts but their "prudence and experience enables them to uſe and "apply it better than other men, and to judge more "exactly what penalties do agree with it, and what "do not; and therefore you think I muſt excuſe you "if you do not take upon you to teach them what it "becomes you rather to learn from them." If we are not to doubt but their prudence and experience enables magiſtrates to judge beſt what penalties are fit, you have indeed given us at laſt a way to know the meaſure of puniſhments to be uſed: but it is ſuch an one as puts an end to your diſtinction of moderate penalties: for no magiſtrates that I know, when they once began to uſe force to bring men to their religion, ever ſtopped till they came to ſome of thoſe ſeverities you condemn; and if you pretend to teach them moderation for the future, with hopes to ſucceed; you ought to have ſhowed them the juſt bounds, beyond which they ought not to go, in a model ſo wholly new, and beſides all experience. But if it be to be determined by their

prudence and experience, whatever degrees of force they ſhall uſe, will always be the right.

Law-makers and governors however beholden to you for your good opinion of their prudence and experience, yet have no reaſon to thank you for your compliment, by giving ſuch an exerciſe to their prudence and experience as to put it upon them to find out the juſt meaſures of puniſhments, by rules you give them; which are ſuch, that neither yourſelf, nor any body elſe, can find out any meaſures by. The other part of your compliment will be ſuſpected not to be ſo much out of your abundant reſpect to law-makers and governors, as out of the great regard you have to yourſelf; for you in vain pretend you forbear to name any particular puniſhments, becauſe you will not take upon you to teach governors and law-makers; when you yourſelf own in the ſame breath, that you are laying down rules by which they are to proceed in the uſe of penalties for promoting religion; which is little different from teaching: and your whole book is nothing elſe but about the magiſtrate's power and duty. I excuſe you therefore for your own ſake from naming any particular puniſhments by your rules: for you have a right to it, as all men have a right to be excuſed from doing what is impoſſible to be done.

Since therefore you grant that thoſe ſeverities you have named, "are more apt to hinder than promote "true religion;" and you cannot aſſign any meaſures of puniſhment, ſhort of thoſe great ones you have condemned, which are fit to promote it; I think it argument enough to prove againſt you, that no puniſhments are fit; till you have ſhowed ſome others, either by name, or ſuch marks as they may be certainly known by, which are fit to promote the true religion: and therefore nothing you have ſaid there, or any where elſe, will ſerve to ſhow that "it is with little reaſon, as you "tell me, that I ſay, that if your indirect and at a diſ-"tance ſerviceableneſs may authorize the magiſtrate to "uſe force in religion, all the cruelties uſed by the "heathens againſt chriſtians, by papiſts againſt proteſ-"tants, and all the perſecuting of chriſtians one amongſt "another,

" another, are all juſtifiable." To which you add, " Not to take notice at preſent how oddly it ſounds, " that that which authorizes the magiſtrates to uſe mo- " derate penalties to promote the true religion, ſhould " juſtify all the cruelties that ever were uſed to pro- " mote heatheniſm or popery."

As oddly as it ſounds to you, it will be evidently true, as long as that which authorizes one, authorizes all magiſtrates of any religion which they believe to be true, to uſe force to promote it; and as long as you cannot aſſign any bounds to your moderate puniſhments, ſhort of thoſe great ones; which you therefore are not able to do, becauſe your principles, whatever your words deny, will carry you to thoſe degrees of ſeverity, which in profeſſion you condemn: and this, whatever you do, I dare ſay every conſidering reader beſides you will plainly ſee. So that this imputation is not ſo unreaſonable; ſince it is evident, that you muſt either renounce all puniſhments whatſoever in religion, or make uſe of thoſe you condemn: for in the next page you tell us, " That all who have ſufficient means of inſtruction " provided for them, may juſtly be puniſhed for not " being of the national religion, where the true is the " national religion; becauſe it is a fault in all ſuch not " to be of the national religion." In England then, for example, not to be of the national religion is a fault, and a fault to be puniſhed by the magiſtrate. The magiſtrate to cure this fault lays, on thoſe who diſſent, a lower degree of penalties, a fine of 1 d. per month. This proving inſufficient, what is the magiſtrate to do? If he be obliged, as you ſay, to amend this fault by penalties, and that low one of 1 d. per month be not ſufficient to procure its amendment, is he not to increaſe the penalty? He therefore doubles the fine to 2 d. per month. This too proves ineffectual, and therefore it is ſtill for the ſame reaſon doubled, till it come to 1s. 5s. 10l. 100l. 1000l. None of theſe penalties working, but yet by being conſtantly levied, leaving the delinquents no longer able to pay; impriſonment and other corporal puniſhments follow to enforce an obedience; till at laſt this gradual increaſe of penalties and force,

each

each degree whereof wrought on ſome few, riſes to the higheſt ſeverities againſt thoſe who ſtand out. For the magiſtrate, who is obliged to correct this vice, as you call it, and to do what in him lies to cure this fault, which oppoſes their ſalvation; and who (if I miſtake not, you tell us,) is anſwerable for all that may follow from his neglect; had no reaſon to raiſe the fine from 1d. to 2d. but becauſe the firſt was ineffectual: and if that were a ſufficient reaſon for raiſing from the firſt to the ſecond degree; why is it not as ſufficient to proceed from the ſecond to the third, and ſo gradually on? I would fain have any one ſhow me where, and upon what ground, ſuch a gradual increaſe of force can ſtop, till it come to the utmoſt extremities. If therefore diſſenting from the church of England be a fault to be puniſhed by the magiſtrate, I deſire you to tell me, where he ſhall hold his hand; to name the ſort or degree of puniſhment, beyond which he ought not to go in the uſe of force, to cure them of that fault, and bring them to conformity. Till you have done that, you might have ſpared that paragraph, where you ſay, "With "what ingenuity I draw you in to condemn force in "general, only becauſe you acknowledge the ill effects "of proſecuting men with fire and ſword, &c. you "may leave every man to judge." And I leave whom you will to judge, whether from your own principles it does not unavoidably follow, that if you condemn any penalties, you muſt condemn all, as I have ſhown; if you will retain any, you muſt retain all; you muſt either take or leave all together. For, as I have ſaid, and you deny not, "Where there is no fault, there no pu-"niſhment is moderate;" ſo I add, Where there is a fault to be corrected by the magiſtrate's force, there no degree of force, which is ineffectual, and not ſufficient to amend it, can be immoderate; eſpecially if it be a fault of great moment in its conſequences, as certainly that muſt be, which draws after it the loſs of men's eternal happineſs.

You will, it is likely, be ready to ſay here again, (for a good ſubterfuge is never to be forſaken) that you except the "deſperately perverſe and obſtinate." I deſire

ſire to know for what reaſon you except them? Is it becauſe they ceaſe to be faulty? Next I aſk you, who are in your ſenſe the deſperately perverſe and obſtinate? Thoſe that 1s. or 5s. or 5l. or 100l. or no fine will work upon? Thoſe who can bear loſs of eſtate, but not loſs of liberty? or loſs of liberty and eſtate, but not corporal pains and torments? or all this, but not loſs of life? For to theſe degrees do men differently ſtand out. And ſince there are men wrought on by the approaches of fire and faggot, which other degrees of ſeverity could not prevail with; where will you bound your deſperately perverſe and obſtinate? The king of France, though you will allow him not to have truth of his ſide, yet when he came to dragooning, found few ſo deſperately perverſe and obſtinate, as not to be wrought on. And why ſhould truth, which in your opinion wants force, and nothing but force, to help it, not have the aſſiſtance of thoſe degrees of force, when leſs will not do to make it prevail, which are able to bring men over to falſe religions, which have no light and ſtrength of their own to help them? You will do well therefore to conſider whether your name of ſeverities, in oppoſition to the moderate puniſhments you ſpeak of, has or can do you any ſervice; whether the diſtinction between compelling and coactive power, be of any uſe or difference at all. For you deny the magiſtrate to have power to compel; and you contend for his uſe of his coactive power; which will then be a good diſtinction, when you can find a way to uſe coactive, or, which is the ſame, compelling power, without compulſion. I deſire you alſo to conſider, if in matters of religion puniſhments are to be employed, becauſe they may be uſeful; whether you can ſtop at any degree that is ineffectual to the end which you propoſe, let that end be what it will. If it be barely to gain a hearing, as in ſome places you ſeem to ſay; I think for that ſmall puniſhments will generally prevail, and you do well to put that and moderate penalties together. If it be to make men conſider, as in other places you ſpeak; you cannot tell when you have obtained that end. But if your end be, which you ſeem moſt to inſiſt on, to make men

men conſider as they ought, i. e. till they embrace; there are many on whom all your moderate penalties, all under thoſe ſeverities you condemn, are too weak to prevail. So that you muſt either confeſs, not conſidering ſo as to "embrace the true religion, i. e. not "conſidering as one ought," is no fault to be puniſhed by the coactive force of the magiſtrate; or elſe you muſt reſume thoſe ſeverities which you have renounced; chooſe you whether of the two you pleaſe.

Therefore it was not ſo much at random that I ſaid, "That thither at laſt perſecution muſt come." Indeed from what you had ſaid of falling under the ſtroke of the ſword, which was nothing to the purpoſe; I added, "That if by that you meant any thing to the "buſineſs in hand, you ſeem to have a reſerve for "greater puniſhments, when leſs are not ſufficient to "bring men to be convinced." Which hath produced this warm reply of yours: "And will you ever pre-"tend to conſcience or modeſty after this? For I be-"ſeech you, ſir, what words could I have uſed more "expreſs or effectual to ſignify, that in my opinion no "diſſenters from the true religion ought to be puniſhed "with the ſword, but ſuch as chooſe rather to rebel "againſt the magiſtrate, than to ſubmit to leſſer penal-"ties? (For how any ſhould refuſe to ſubmit to thoſe "penalties, but by rebelling againſt the magiſtrate, I "ſuppoſe you will not undertake to tell me.) It was "for this very purpoſe that I uſed thoſe words to pre-"vent cavils; (as I was then ſo ſimple as to think I "might:) and I dare appeal to any man of common "ſenſe and common honeſty, whether they are capable "of any other meaning. And yet the very thing which "I ſo plainly diſclaim in them you pretend (without "ſo much as offering to ſhow how) to collect from "them. Thither, you ſay, at laſt, viz. to the taking "away men's lives for the ſaving of their ſouls, per-"ſecution muſt come: as you fear, notwithſtanding "my talk of moderate puniſhments, I myſelf intimate "in thoſe words: and if I mean any thing in them to "the buſineſs in hand, I ſeem to have a reſerve for "greater puniſhments, when leſſer are not ſufficient to

"bring

" bring men to be convinced. Sir, I ſhould expect " fairer dealing from one of your pagans or mahome- " tans. But I ſhall only add, that I would never wiſh " that any man who has undertaken a bad cauſe ſhould " more plainly confeſs it than by ſerving it, as here " (and not here only) you ſerve yours." Good ſir, be not ſo angry, leſt to obſerving men you increaſe the ſuſpicion. One may, without forfeiture of modeſty or conſcience, fear what men's principles threaten, though their words diſclaim it. Nonconformity to the national, when it is the true religion, as in England, is a fault, a vice, ſay you, to be corrected by the coactive power of the magiſtrate. If ſo, and force be the proper remedy, he muſt increaſe it, till it be ſtrong enough to work the cure; and muſt not neglect his duty; for ſo you make it, when he has force enough in his hand to make this remedy more powerful. For wherever force is proper to work on men, and bring them to a compliance, its not producing that effect can only be imputed to its being too little: and if ſo, whither at laſt muſt it come, but to the late methods of procuring conformity, and as his moſt chriſtian majeſty called it, ſaving of ſouls, in France, or ſeverities like them, when more moderate ones cannot produce it? For to continue inefficacious penalties, inſufficient upon trial to maſter the fault they are applied to, is unjuſtifiable cruelty; and that which no-body can have a right to uſe, it ſerving only to diſeaſe and harm people, without amending them: for you tell us, they ſhould be ſuch penalties as ſhould make them uneaſy.

He that ſhould vex and pain a ſore you had, with frequent dreſſing it with ſome moderate, painful, but inefficacious plaiſter, that promoted not the cure; would juſtly be thought, not only an ignorant, but a diſhoneſt ſurgeon. If you are in the ſurgeon's hands, and his help is requiſite, and the cure that way to be wrought; corroſives and fire are the moſt merciful, as well as only juſtifiable way of cure, when the caſe needs them. And therefore I hope I may ſtill pretend to modeſty and conſcience, though I ſhould have thought you ſo rational a man, as to be led by your own principles; and

and ſo honeſt, charitable, and zealous for the ſalvation of men's ſouls, as not to vex and diſeaſe them with inefficacious remedies to no purpoſe, and let them miſs of ſalvation, for want of more vigorous proſecutions. For if conformity to the church of England be neceſſary to ſalvation; for elſe what neceſſity can you pretend of puniſhing men at all to bring them to it? it is cruelty to their ſouls (if you have authority for any ſuch means) to uſe ſome, and not to uſe ſufficient force to bring them to conform. And I dare ſay you are ſatisfied, that the French diſcipline of dragooning would have made many in England conformiſts, whom your lower penalties will not prevail on to be ſo.

But to inform you that my apprehenſions were not ſo wholly out of the way, I beſeech you to read here what you have writ in theſe words: "For how confidently "ſoever you tell me here, that it is more than I can "ſay for my political puniſhments, that they were ever "uſeful for the promoting true religion; I appeal to "all obſerving perſons, whether wherever true religion "or ſound chriſtianity has been nationally received and "eſtabliſhed by moderate penal laws, it has not always "loſt ground by the relaxation of thoſe laws: whether "ſects and hereſies, (even the wildeſt and moſt abſurd) "and even epicuriſm and atheiſm, have not continually "thereupon ſpread themſelves; and whether the very "ſpirit and life of chriſtianity has not ſenſibly decayed, as "well as the number of ſound profeſſors of it been daily "leſſened upon it: not to ſpeak of what at this time "our eyes cannot but ſee, for fear of giving offence; "though I hope it will be none to any, that have a juſt "concern for truth and piety, to take notice of the "books and pamphlets which now fly ſo thick about "this kingdom, manifeſtly tending to the multiplying "of ſects and diviſions, and even to the promoting of "ſcepticiſm in religion among us." Here you bemoan the decaying ſtate of religion amongſt us at preſent, by reaſon of taking off the penalties from proteſtant diſſenters: and I beſeech you what penalties were they? Such whereby many have been ruined in their fortunes; ſuch whereby many have loſt their liberties, and ſome their

their lives in prisons; such as have sent some into banishment, stripped of all they had. These were the penal laws by which the national religion was established in England; and these you call moderate: for you say, "Wherever true religion or sound christianity "has been nationally received and established by mo- "derate penal laws;" and I hope you do not here exclude England from having its religion so established by law, which we so often hear of; or if to serve the present occasion you should, would you also deny, that in the following words you speak of the present relaxation in England? where after your appeal to all observing people for the dismal consequences, which you suppose to have every-where followed from such relaxations, you add these pathetical words, "Not to speak "of what at this time our eyes cannot but see, for fear "of giving offence:" so heavy does the present relaxation sit on your mind; which since it is of penal laws you call moderate, I shall show you what they are.

In the first year of queen Elizabeth, there was a penalty of 1s. a sunday and holiday laid upon every one, who came not to the common prayer then established. This penalty of 1s. a time not prevailing, as was desired, in the twenty-third year of her reign was increased to 20l. a month, and imprisonment for non-payment within three months after judgment given. In the twenty-ninth year of Elizabeth, to draw this yet closer, and make it more forcible, it was enacted, That whoever upon one conviction did not continue to pay on the 20l. per month, without any other conviction or proceedings against him till he submitted and conformed, should forfeit all his goods, and two-thirds of his land for his life. But this being not yet thought sufficient, it was in the thirty-fifth year of that queen completed, and the moderate penal laws, upon which our national religion was established, and whose relaxation you cannot bear, but from thence date the decay of the very spirit and life of christianity, were brought to perfection. For then going to conventicles, or a month's absence from church, was to be punished with imprisonment, till the offender conformed; and if he

conformed

conformed not within three months, then he was to abjure the realm, and forfeit all his goods and chattels for ever, and his lands and tenements during his life: and if he would not abjure, or, abjuring, did not depart the realm within a time prefixed, or returned again, he was to suffer death as a felon. And thus your moderate penal laws stood for the established religion, till their penalties were, in respect of protestant dissenters, lately taken off. And now let the reader judge whether your pretence to moderate punishments, or my suspicion of what a man of your principles might have in store for dissenters, have more of modesty or conscience in it; since you openly declare your regret for the taking away such an establishment, as by the gradual increase of penalties reached men's estates, liberties, and lives; and which you must be presumed to allow and approve of, till you tell us plainly, where, according to your measures, those penalties should, or, according to your principles, they could, have stopped.

You tell us, That where this only true religion, viz. of the church of England, is received, other religions ought "to be discouraged in some measure." A pretty expression for undoing, imprisonment, banishment; for those have been some of the discouragements given to dissenters here in England. You will again, no doubt, cry aloud, that you tell me you condemn these as much as I do. If you heartily condemn them, I wonder you should say so little to discourage them; I wonder you are so silent in representing to the magistrate the unlawfulness and danger of using them, in a discourse where you are treating of the magistrate's power and duty in matters of religion; especially this being the side on which, as far as we may guess by experience, their prudence is apteſt to err: but your modesty, you know, leaves all to the magistrates prudence and experience on that side, though you over and over again encourage them not to neglect their duty in the use of force, to which you set no bounds.

You tell us, "Certainly no man doubts but the prudence and experience of governors and law-givers "enables them to use and apply it," viz. your rule for the

the measure of punishments, which I have showed to be no rule at all: "And to judge more exactly what "penalties do agree with it; and therefore you must "be excused if you do not take upon you to teach "them what it becomes you rather to learn from them." If your modesty be such, and you then did what became you, you could not but learn from your governors and law-givers, and so be satisfied till within this year or two, that those penalties which they measured out for the establishment of the true religion, though they reached to men's estates, liberties, and lives, were such as were fit. But what you have learned of your law-makers and governors since the relaxation, or what opinion you have of their experience and prudence now, is not so easy to say.

Perhaps you will say again, that you have in express words declared against "fire and sword, loss of estate, "maiming with corporal punishments, starving and "tormenting in noisome prisons;" and one cannot either in modesty or conscience disbelieve you: yet in the same letter you with sorrow and regret speak of the relaxation of such penalties laid on nonconformity, by which men have lost their estates, liberties, and lives too, in noisome prisons, and in this too must we not believe you? I dare say, there are very few who read that passage of yours, so feelingly it is penned, who want modesty or conscience to believe you therein to be in earnest; and the rather, because what drops from men by chance, when they are not upon their guard, is always thought the best interpretation of their thoughts.

You name "loss of estate, of liberty, and torment-"ing, which is corporal punishment, as if you were "against them:" certainly you know what you meant by these words, when you said, you condemned them; was it any degree of loss of liberty or estate, any degree of corporal punishment that you condemned, or only the utmost, or some degree between these? unless you had then some meaning, and unless you please to tell us, what that meaning was; where it is, that in your opinion the magistrate ought to stop; who can believe

you are in earneſt? This I think you may and ought to do for our information in your ſyſtem, without any apprehenſion that governors and law-givers will deem themſelves much taught by you, which your modeſty makes you ſo cautious of. Whilſt you refuſe to do this, and keep yourſelf under the maſk of moderate, convenient, and ſufficient force and penalties, and other ſuch-like uncertain and undetermined puniſhments, I think a conſcientious and ſober diſſenter might expect fairer dealing from one of my pagans or mahometans, as you pleaſe to call them, than from one, who ſo profeſſes moderation, that what degrees of force, what kind of puniſhments will ſatisfy him, he either knows not, or will not declare. For your moderate and convenient may, when you come to interpret them, ſignify what puniſhments you pleaſe: for the cure being to be wrought by force, that will be convenient, which the ſtubbornneſs of the evil requires; and that moderate, which is but enough to work the cure. And therefore I ſhall return your own compliment, "That I would "never wiſh that any man who has undertaken a bad "cauſe, ſhould more plainly confeſs it than by ſerving "it, as here (and not here only) you ſerve yours." I ſhould beg your pardon for this ſort of language, were it not your own. And what right you have to it, the ſkill you ſhow in the management of general and doubtful words and expreſſions, of uncertain and undetermined ſignification, will, I doubt not, abundantly convince the reader. An inſtance we have in the argument before us; for I appeal to any ſober man, who ſhall carefully read what you write, where you pretend to tell the world plainly and directly what puniſhments are to be uſed by your ſcheme, whether, after having weighed all you ſay concerning that matter, he can tell, what a nonconformiſt is to expect from you, or find any thing but ſuch acuteneſs and ſtrength as lie in the uncertainty and reſerve of your way of talking; which whether it be any way ſuited to your modeſty and conſcience, where you have undertaken to tell us what the puniſhments are, whereby you would have men

men brought to embrace the true religion, I leave you to consider.

If having said, "Whether true religion or found "christianity has been nationally received and esta-"lished by moderate penal laws;" you shall for your defence of the establishment of the religion in England by law, say, which is all is left you to say, that though such severe laws were made, yet it was only by the execution of moderate penal laws, that it was established and supported: but that those severe laws that touched men's estates, liberties, and lives, were never put in execution. Why then do you so seriously bemoan the loss of them? But I advise you not to make use of that plea, for there are examples in the memory of hundreds now living, of every one of those laws of queen Elizabeth being put in execution; and pray remember, if by denying it you require this truth to be made good, it is you that force the publishing of a catalogue of men that have lost their estates, liberties, and lives in prison, which it would be more for the advantage of the religion established by law, should be forgotten.

But to conclude this great accusation of yours: if you were not conscious to yourself of some tendency that way, why such an outcry? Why were modesty and conscience called in question? Why was it less fair dealing than you could have expected from a pagan or mahometan, for me to say, if in those words "you "meant any thing to the business in hand, you seemed "to have a reserve for greater punishments?" Your business there being to prove, that there was a power vested in the magistrate to use force in matters of religion, what could be more beside the business in hand, than to tell us, as you interpret your meaning here, that the magistrate had a power to use force against those who rebelled; for whoever denied that, whether dissenters or not dissenters? Where was it questioned by the author or me, that "whoever rebelled, were to fall "under the stroke of the magistrate's sword?" And therefore, without breach of modesty or conscience, I might say, what I again here repeat, "That if in "those words you meant any thing to the business

" in hand, you ſeemed to have a reſerve for greater " puniſhments."

One thing more give me leave to add in defence of my modeſty and conſcience, or rather to juſtify myſelf from having gueſſed ſo wholly beſide the matter, if I ſhould have ſaid, which I did not, " that I feared you " had a reſerve for greater puniſhments." For I having brought the inſtances of Ananias and Sapphira, to ſhow that the apoſtles wanted not power to puniſh, if they found it neceſſary to uſe it; you infer, that therefore " puniſhment may be ſometimes neceſſary." What puniſhments I beſeech you, for theirs coſt them their lives? He that, as you do, concludes from thence, that therefore " puniſhments may be ſometimes neceſ- " ſary," will hardly avoid, whatever he ſays, to conclude capital puniſhments neceſſary: and when they are neceſſary, it is you know the magiſtrate's duty to uſe them. You ſee how natural it is for men to go whither their principles lead them, though at firſt ſight perhaps they thought it too far.

If to avoid this, you now ſay you meant it of the puniſhment of the inceſtuous corinthian, whom I alſo mentioned in the ſame place; I think, ſuppoſing yourſelf to lie under the imputation of a reſerve of greater puniſhments, you ought in prudence to have ſaid ſo there. Next you know not what puniſhment it was the inceſtuous corinthian underwent; but it being " for " the deſtruction of the fleſh," it ſeems to be no very light one: and if you will take your friend St. Auſtin's word for it, as he in the very epiſtle you quote tells us, it was a very ſevere one, making as much difference between it, and the ſeverities men uſually ſuffer in priſon, as there is between the cruelty of the devil and that of the moſt barbarous jailor: ſo that if your moderate puniſhments will reach to that laid on the inceſtuous corinthian for the deſtruction of the fleſh, we may preſume them to be what other people call ſeverities.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER V.

How long your punishments are to continue.

THE measure of punishments being to be estimated as well by the length of their duration, as the intenseness of their degrees, it is fit we take a view also of your scheme in this part:

" I told you, that moderate punishments that are " continued, that men find no end of, know no way " out of, sit heavy, and become immoderately uneasy. " Dissenters you would have punished, to make them " consider. Your penalties have had the effect on them " you intended; they have made them consider; and " they have done their utmost in considering. What " now must be done with them? They must be " punished on, for they are still dissenters. If it were " just, and you had reason at first to punish a dissenter, " to make him consider, when you did not know but " that he had considered already; it is as just, and you " have as much reason to punish him on, even when he " has performed what your punishment was designed " for, and has considered, but yet remains a dissenter. " For I may justly suppose, and you must grant, that a " man may remain a dissenter after all the consideration " your moderate penalties can bring him to: when we " see great punishments, even those severities you " disown as too great, are not able to make men con- " sider so far as to be convinced, and brought over to " the national church. If your punishments may not " be inflicted on men, to make them consider, who " have or may have considered already, for aught you " know; then dissenters are never to be once punished, " no more than any other sort of men. If dissenters " are to be punished, to make them consider, whether " they have considered or no; then their punishments,

" though they do conſider, muſt never ceaſe as long as " they are diſſenters; which whether it be to puniſh " them only to bring them to conſider, let all men " judge. This I am ſure; puniſhments in your " method muſt either never begin upon diſſenters, or " never ceaſe. And ſo pretend moderation if you " pleaſe, the puniſhments which your method requires, " muſt be either very immoderate, or none at all." But to this you ſay nothing, only for the adjuſting of the length of your puniſhments, and therein vindicating the conſiſtency and practicableneſs of your ſcheme, you tell us, " that as long as men reject the true religion " duly propoſed to them, ſo long they offend and de- " ſerve puniſhment, and therefore it is but juſt that ſo " long they ſhould be left liable to it." You promiſed to anſwer to this queſtion, amongſt others, " plainly " and directly." The queſtion is, how long they are to be puniſhed? And your anſwer is, " It is but juſt " that ſo long they ſhould be liable to puniſhment." This extraordinary caution in ſpeaking out, if it were not very natural to you, would be apt to make one ſuſpect it was accommodated more to ſome difficulties of your ſcheme, than to your promiſe of anſwering plainly and directly; or poſſibly you thought it would not agree to that character of moderation you aſſume, to own, that all the penal laws which were lately here in force, and whoſe relaxation you bemoan, ſhould be conſtantly put in execution. But your moderation in this point comes too late. For as your charity, as you tell us in the next paragraph, " requires that they be kept ſubject to penalties:" ſo the watchful charity of others in this age hath found out ways to encourage informers, and put it out of the magiſtrate's moderation to ſtop the execution of the law againſt diſſenters, if he ſhould be inclined to it.

We will therefore take it for granted, that if penal laws be made concerning religion, (for more zeal uſually animates them than others) they will be put in execution: and indeed I have heard it argued to be very abſurd to make or continue laws, that are not conſtantly put in execution. And now to ſhow you how well

well your anſwer conſiſts with other parts of your ſcheme, I ſhall need only to mind you, that if men muſt be puniſhed as long as they reject the true religion; thoſe who puniſh them muſt be judges what is the true religion. But this objection, with ſome others, to which this part of your anſwer is obnoxious, having been made to you more at large elſewhere, I ſhall here omit, and proceed to other parts of your anſwer.

You begin with your reaſon for the anſwer you afterwards give us in the words I laſt quoted: your reaſon runs thus: "For certainly nothing is more reaſonable "than that men ſhould be ſubject to puniſhment as long "as they continue to offend. And as long as men reject "the true religion tendered them with ſufficient evidence "of the truth of it, ſo long it is certain they offend." It is certainly very reaſonable, that men ſhould be ſubject to puniſhment from thoſe they offend as long as they continue to offend: but it will not from hence follow, that thoſe who offend God, are always ſubject to puniſhment from men. For if they be, why does not the magiſtrate puniſh envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableneſs? If you anſwer, becauſe they are not capable of judicial proofs: I think I may ſay it is as eaſy to prove a man guilty of envy, hatred, or uncharitableneſs, as it is to prove him guilty of "rejecting the "true religion tendered him with ſufficient evidence of "the truth of it." But if it be his duty to puniſh all offences againſt God; why does the magiſtrate never puniſh lying, which is an offence againſt God, and is an offence capable of being judicially proved? It is plain therefore that it is not the ſenſe of all mankind, that it is the magiſtrate's duty to puniſh all offences againſt God; and where it is not his duty to uſe force, you will grant the magiſtrate is not to uſe it in matters of religion; becauſe where it is neceſſary, it is his duty to uſe it; but where it is not neceſſary, you yourſelf ſay, it is not lawful. It would be convenient therefore for you to reform your propoſition from that looſe generality it now is in, and then prove it, before it can be allowed you to be to your purpoſe; though it be

ever so true, that "you know not a greater crime a man "can be guilty of, than rejecting the true religion."

You go on with your proof, that so long as men reject the true religion, &c. so long they offend, and consequently may justly be punished: "Because, say "you, it is impossible for any man innocently to reject "the true religion so tendered to him. For whoever "rejects that religion so tendered, does either appre- "hend and perceive the truth of it, or he does not. If "he does, I know not what greater crime any man can "be guilty of. If he does not perceive the truth of it, "there is no account to be given of that, but either "that he shuts his eyes against the evidence which is "offered him, and will not at all consider it; or that "he does not consider it as he ought, viz. with such "care as is requisite, and with a sincere desire to learn "the truth; either of which does manifestly involve "him in guilt. To say here that a man who has the "true religion proposed to him with sufficient evidence "of its truth, may consider it as he ought," or do his utmost in considering, "and yet not perceive the truth "of it; is neither more nor less, than to say, that "sufficient evidence is not sufficient evidence. For "what does any man mean by sufficient evidence, but "such as will certainly win assent wherever it is duly "considered?"

I shall not trouble myself here to examine when requisite care, duly considered, and such other words, which bring one back to the same place from whence one set out, are cast up, whether all this fine reasoning will amount to any thing, but begging what is in the question: but shall only tell you, that what you say here and in other places about sufficient evidence, is built upon this, that the evidence wherewith a man proposes the true religion, he may know to be such, as will not fail to gain the assent of whosoever does what lies in him in considering it. This is the supposition, without which all your talk of sufficient evidence will do you no service, try it where you will. But it is a supposition that is far enough from carrying with it suffi-

ſufficient evidence to make it be admitted without proof.

Whatever gains any man's aſſent, one may be ſure had ſufficient evidence in reſpect of that man: but that is far enough from proving it evidence ſufficient to prevail on another, let him conſider it as long and as much as he can. The tempers of men's minds; the principles ſettled there by time and education, beyond the power of the man himſelf to alter them; the different capacities of men's underſtandings, and the ſtrange ideas they are often filled with; are ſo various and uncertain, that it is impoſſible to find that evidence, eſpecially in things of a mixed diſquiſition, depending on ſo long a train of conſequences, as ſome points of the true religion may, which one can confidently ſay will be ſufficient for all men. It is demonſtration that 31876 is the product of 9467172 divided by 297, and yet I challenge you to find one man of a thouſand, to whom you can tender this propoſition with demonſtrative or ſufficient evidence to convince him of the truth of it in a dark room; or ever to make this evidence appear to a man, that cannot write and read, ſo as to make him embrace it as a truth, if another, whom he hath more confidence in, tells him it is not ſo. All the demonſtrative evidence the thing has, all the tender you can make of it, all the conſideration he can employ about it, will never be able to diſcover to him that evidence which ſhall convince him it is true, unleſs you will at threeſcore and ten, for that may be the caſe, have him neglect his calling, go to ſchool, and learn to write and read, and caſt accounts which he may never be able to attain to.

You ſpeak more than once of men's being brought to lay aſide their prejudices to make them conſider as they ought, and judge right of matters in religion; and I grant without doing ſo they cannot: but it is impoſſible for force to make them do it, unleſs it could ſhow them, which are prejudices in their minds, and diſtinguiſh them from the truths there. Who is there almoſt that has not prejudices, that he does not know to be ſo; and what can force do in that caſe? It can no more remove them, to make way for truth, than it can remove one truth

truth to make way for another; or rather remove an eſtabliſhed truth, or that which is looked on as an unqueſtionable principle, (for ſo are often men's prejudices) to make way for a truth not yet known, nor appearing to be one. It is not every one knows, or can bring himſelf to Des Cartes's way of doubting, and ſtrip his thoughts of all opinions, till he brings them to ſelf-evident principles, and then upon them builds all his future tenets.

Do not think all the world, who are not of your church, abandon themſelves to an utter careleſſneſs of their future ſtate. You cannot but allow there are many turks who ſincerely ſeek truth, to whom yet you could never bring evidence ſufficient to convince them of the truth of the chriſtian religion, whilſt they looked on it as a principle not to be queſtioned, that the Koran was of divine revelation. This poſſibly you will tell me is a prejudice, and ſo it is; but yet if this man ſhall tell you it is no more a prejudice in him, than it is a prejudice in any one amongſt chriſtians, who having not examined it, lays it down as an unqueſtionable principle of his religion, that the ſcripture is the word of God; what will you anſwer to him? And yet it would ſhake a great many chriſtians in their religion, if they ſhould lay by that prejudice, and ſuſpend their judgment of it, until they had made it out to themſelves with evidence ſufficient to convince one who is not prejudiced in favour of it; and it would require more time, books, languages, learning and ſkill, than falls to moſt men's ſhare to eſtabliſh them therein; if you will not allow them, in this ſo diſtinguiſhing and fundamental a point, to rely on the learning, knowledge, and judgment of ſome perſons whom they have in reverence or admiration. This though you blame it as an ill way, yet you can allow in one of your own religion, even to that degree, that he may be ignorant of the grounds of his religion. And why then may you not allow it to a turk, not as a good way, or as having led him to the truth; but as a way as fit for him, as for one of your church to acquieſce in;

in; and as fit to exempt him from your force, as to exempt any one of your church from it?

To prevent your commenting on this, in which you have ſhown ſo much dexterity, give me leave to tell you, that for all this I do not think all religions equally true or equally certain. But this, I ſay, is impoſſible for you, or me, or any man, to know, whether another has done his duty in examining the evidence on both ſides, when he embraces that ſide of the queſtion, which we, perhaps upon other views, judge falſe: and therefore we can have no right to puniſh or perſecute him for it. In this, whether and how far any one is faulty, muſt be left to the Searcher of hearts, the great and righteous Judge of all men, who knows all their circumſtances, all the powers and workings of their minds; where it is they ſincerely follow, and by what default they at any time miſs truth: and he, we are ſure, will judge uprightly.

But when one man ſhall think himſelf a competent judge, that the true religion is propoſed with evidence ſufficient for another; and thence ſhall take upon him to puniſh him as an offender, becauſe he embraces not, upon evidence that he the propoſer judges ſufficient, the religion that he judges true; he had need be able to look into the thoughts of men, and know their ſeveral abilities; unleſs he will make his own underſtanding and faculties to be the meaſure of thoſe of all mankind; which if they be no higher elevated, no larger in their comprehenſion, no more diſcerning, than thoſe of ſome men, he will not only be unfit to be a judge in that, but in almoſt any caſe whatſoever.

But ſince, 1. You make it a condition to the making a man an offender in not being of the true religion, that it has been tendered him with ſufficient evidence. 2. Since you think it ſo eaſy for men to determine when the true religion has been tendered to any one with ſufficient evidence. And 3. Since you pronounce "it "impiety to ſay that God hath not furniſhed mankind "with competent means for the promoting his own "honour in the world, and the good of ſouls." Give me leave to aſk you a queſtion or two. 1. Can any one

be

be ſaved without embracing the one only true religion? 2. Were any of the americans of that one only true religion, when the europeans firſt came amongſt them? 3. Whether any of the americans, before the chriſtians came amongſt them, had offended in rejecting the true religion tendered with ſufficient evidence? When you have thought upon, and fairly anſwered theſe queſtions, you will be fitter to determine, how competent a judge man is, what is ſufficient evidence; who do offend in not being of the true religion; and what puniſhments they are liable to for it.

But methinks here, where you ſpend almoſt a whole page upon the crime of rejecting the true religion duly tendered, and the puniſhment that is juſtly due to it from the magiſtrate, you forget yourſelf, and the foundation of your plea for force; which is, that it is neceſſary: when you are ſo far from proving it to be ſo in this caſe of puniſhing the offence of rejecting the true religion, that in this very page you diſtinguiſhed it from what is neceſſary, where you tell us, "your deſign does "rather oblige you to conſider how long men may "need puniſhment, than how long it may be juſt to "puniſh them." So that though they offend, yet if they do not need puniſhment, the magiſtrate cannot uſe it, if you ground, as you ſay you do, the lawfulneſs of force for promoting the true religion upon the neceſſity of it. Nor can you ſay, that by his commiſſion from the law of nature, of doing good, the magiſtrate, beſides reducing his wandering ſubjects out of the wrong into the right way, is appointed alſo to be the avenger of God's wrath on unbelievers, or thoſe that err in matters of religion. This at leaſt you thought not fit to own in the firſt draught of your ſcheme; for I do not remember, in all your "Argument conſider-"ed," one word of crime or puniſhment: nay, in writing this ſecond treatiſe, you were ſo ſhy of owning any thing of puniſhment, that to my remembrance, you ſcrupulouſly avoided the uſe of that word, till you came to this place; and always where the repeating my words did not oblige you to it, carefully uſed the term of penalties for it, as any one may obſerve, who reads

the

the preceding part of this letter of yours, which I am now examining. And you were so nice in the point, that three or four leaves backwards, where I say, By your rule dissenters must be punished, you mend it, and say, "or if I please, subjected to moderate penalties." But here when the inquiry, how long force was to be continued on men, showed the absurdity of that pretence, that they were to be punished on without end, to make them consider; rather than part with your beloved force, you open the matter a little farther, and profess directly the punishing men for their religion. For though you do all you can to cover it under the name of rejecting the true religion duly proposed; yet it is in truth no more but being of a religion different from yours, that you would have them punished for: for all that the author pleads for, and you can oppose in writing against him, is toleration of religion. Your scheme therefore being thus mended, your hypothesis enlarged, being of a different religion from the national found criminal, and punishments found justly to belong to it; it is to be hoped, that in good time your punishments may grow too, and be advanced to all those degrees you in the beginning condemned; when having considered a little farther, you cannot miss finding, that the obstinacy of the criminals does not lessen their crime, and therefore justice will require severer execution to be done upon them.

But you tell us here, "Because your design does "rather oblige you to consider how long men may need "punishment, than how long it may be just to punish "them; therefore you shall add, that as long as men "refuse to embrace the true religion, so long penal-"ties are necessary for them to dispose them to consider "and embrace it: and that therefore as justice allows, "so charity requires, that they be kept subject to pe-"nalties, till they embrace the true religion." Let us therefore see the consistency of this with other parts of your hypothesis, and examine it a little by them.

Your doctrine is, that where intreaties and admonitions upon trial do not prevail, punishments are to be used; but they must be moderate. Moderate punish-

ments

ments have been tried, and they prevail not; what now is to be done? Are not greater to be uſed? No. For what reaſon? Becauſe thoſe whom moderate penalties will not prevail on being deſperately perverſe and obſtinate, remedies are not to be provided for the incurable, as you tell us in the page immediately preceding.

Moderate puniſhments have been tried upon a man once, and again, and a third time, but prevail not at all, make no impreſſion; they are repeated as many times more, but are ſtill found ineffectual: pray tell me a reaſon why ſuch a man is concluded ſo deſperately perverſe and obſtinate, that greater degrees will not work upon him; but yet not ſo deſperately perverſe and obſtinate, but that the ſame degrees repeated may work upon him? I will not urge here, that this is to pretend to know the juſt degree of puniſhment that will or will not work on any one; which I ſhould imagine a pretty intricate buſineſs: but this I have to ſay, that if you can think it reaſonable and uſeful to continue a man ſeveral years, nay his whole life, under the ſame repeated puniſhments, without going any higher, though they work not at all; becauſe it is poſſible ſome time or other they may work on him; why is it not as reaſonable and uſeful, I am ſure it is much more juſtifiable and charitable, to leave him all his life under the means, which all agree God has appointed, without going any higher; becauſe it is not impoſſible that ſome time or other preaching, and a word ſpoken in due ſeaſon, may work upon him? For why you ſhould deſpair of the ſucceſs of preaching and perſuaſion upon a fruitleſs trial, and thereupon think yourſelf authorized to uſe force; and yet not ſo deſpair of the ſucceſs of moderate force, as after years of fruitleſs trial to continue it on, and not to proceed to higher degrees of puniſhment; you are concerned for the vindication of your ſyſtem to ſhow a reaſon.

I mention the trial of preaching and perſuaſion, to ſhow the unreaſonableneſs of your hypotheſis, ſuppoſing ſuch a trial made: not that in yours, or the common method, there is or can be a fair trial made what preaching

ing and perſuaſion can do. For care is taken by puniſhments and ill treatment to indiſpoſe and turn away men's minds, and to add averſion to their ſcruples; an excellent way to ſoften men's inclinations, and temper them for the impreſſion of arguments and intreaties; though theſe too are only talked of: for I cannot but wonder to find you mention, as you do, giving ear to admonitions, intreaties, and perſuaſions, when theſe are ſeldom, if ever made uſe of, but in places, where thoſe, who are to be wrought on by them, are known to be out of hearing; nor can be expected to come there, till by ſuch means they have been wrought on.

It is not without reaſon therefore you cannot part with your penalties, and would have no end put to your puniſhments, but continue them on; ſince you leave ſo much to their operation, and make ſo little uſe of other means to work upon diſſenters.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the end, for which force is to be uſed.

HE that ſhould read the beginning of your "Argument conſidered," would think it in earneſt to be your deſign to have force employed to make men ſeriouſly conſider, and nothing elſe: but he that ſhall look a little farther into it, and to that add alſo your defence of it, will find by the variety of ends you deſign your force for, that either you know not well what you would have it for; or elſe, whatever it was you aimed at, you called it ſtill by that name which beſt fitted the occaſion, and would ſerve beſt in that place to recommend the uſe of it.

You aſk me, "Whether the mildneſs and gentleneſs "of the goſpel deſtroys the coactive power of the ma-"giſtrate?" I anſwer, as you ſuppoſed, No: upon which you infer, "Then it ſeems the magiſtrate may "uſe

" uſe his coactive power, without offending againſt the " mildneſs and gentleneſs of the goſpel." Yes, where he has commiſſion and authority to uſe it. " And ſo, " ſay you, it will conſiſt well enough with the mildneſs " and gentleneſs of the goſpel for the magiſtrate to uſe " his coactive power to procure them" [I ſuppoſe you mean the miniſters and preachers of the national religion] " a hearing where their prayers and intreaties " will not do it." No, it will not conſiſt with the gentle and mild method of the goſpel, unleſs the goſpel has directed it, or ſomething elſe to ſupply its want, till it could be had. As for miracles, which you pretend to have ſupplied the want of force in the firſt ages of chriſtianity, you will find that conſidered in another place. But, ſir, ſhow me a country where the miniſters and teachers of the national and true religion go about with prayers and intreaties to procure a hearing, and cannot obtain it; and there I think I need not ſtand with you for the magiſtrate to uſe force to procure it them; but that I fear will not ſerve your turn.

To ſhow the inconſiſtency and impracticableneſs of your method, I had ſaid, " Let us now ſee to what end " they muſt be puniſhed: ſometimes it is, To bring " them to conſider thoſe reaſons and arguments which " are proper and ſufficient to convince them: of what? " That it is not eaſy to ſet Grantham ſteeple upon " Paul's church? Whatever it be you would have them " convinced of, you are not willing to tell us; and ſo " it may be any thing. Sometimes it is, To incline " them to lend an ear to thoſe who tell them they have " miſtaken their way, and offer to ſhow them the right. " Which is, to lend an ear to all who differ from them " in religion, as well crafty ſeducers, as others. Whe- " ther this be for the procuring the ſalvation of their " ſouls, the end for which you ſay this force is to be " uſed, judge you. But this I am ſure, whoever will " lend an ear to all who will tell them they are out of " the way, will not have much time for any other bu- " ſineſs.

" Sometimes it is, To recover men to ſo much ſo- " briety and reflection, as ſeriouſly to put the queſtion

" to

" to themſelves, whether it be really worth their while " to undergo ſuch inconveniencies, for adhering to a " religion which, for any thing they know, may be " falſe; or for rejecting another (if that be the caſe) " which, for aught they know, may be true; till they " have brought it to the bar of reaſon, and given it a " fair trial there. Which in ſhort amounts to thus " much, viz. To make them examine whether their " religion be true, and ſo worth the holding, under " thoſe penalties that are annexed to it. Diſſenters are " indebted to you for your great care of their ſouls. " But what, I beſeech you, ſhall become of thoſe of " the national church, every-where, which make far " the greater part of mankind, who have no ſuch pu- " niſhments to make them conſider; who have not this " only remedy provided for them, but are left in that " deplorable condition, you mention, of being ſuf- " fered quietly, and without moleſtation, to take no " care at all of their ſouls, or in doing of it to follow " their own prejudices, humours, or ſome crafty ſe- " ducers? Need not thoſe of the national church, as " well as others, bring their religion to the bar of rea- " ſon, and give it a fair trial there? And if they need " to do ſo, as they muſt, if all national religions can- " not be ſuppoſed true; they will always need that " which you ſay is the only means to make them do ſo. " So that if you are ſure, as you tell us, that there is " need of your method; I am ſure, there is as much " need of it in national churches as any other. And " ſo, for aught I can ſee, you muſt either puniſh them, " or let others alone; unleſs you think it reaſonable " that the far greater part of mankind ſhould conſtantly " be without that ſovereign and only remedy, which " they ſtand in need of equally with other people.

" Sometimes the end for which men muſt be pu- " niſhed is, to diſpoſe them to ſubmit to inſtruction, " and to give a fair hearing to the reaſons offered for " the enlightening their minds, and diſcovering the " truth to them. If their own words may be taken for " it, there are as few diſſenters as conformiſts, in any " country, who will not profeſs they have done, and

" do this. And if their own words may not be taken, " who, I pray, must be judge? You and your magis- " trates? If so, then it is plain you punish them not " to dispose them to submit to instruction, but to your " instruction; not to dispose them to give a fair hear- " ing to reasons offered for the enlightening their minds, " but to give an obedient hearing to your reasons. If " you mean this, it had been fairer and shorter to have " spoken out plainly, than thus in fair words, of in- " definite signification, to say that which amounts to " nothing. For what sense is it to punish a man to " dispose him to submit to instruction, and give a fair " hearing to reasons offered for the enlightening his " mind, and discovering truth to him, who goes two " or three times a week several miles on purpose to do " it, and that with the hazard of his liberty or purse; " unless you mean your instructions, your reasons, your " truth? Which brings us but back to what you have " disclaimed, plain persecution for differing in reli- " gion.

" Sometimes this is to be done, To prevail with men " to weigh matters of religion carefully and impartially. " Discountenance and punishment put into one scale, " with impunity and hopes of preferment put into the " other, is as sure a way to make a man weigh impar- " tially, as it would be for a prince to bribe and threaten " a judge to make him judge uprightly.

" Sometimes it is, To make men bethink themselves, " and put it out of the power of any foolish humour, " or unreasonable prejudice, to alienate them from truth " and their own happiness. Add but this, to put it " out of the power of any humour or prejudice of their " own, or other men's; and I grant the end is good, " if you can find the means to procure it. But why it " should not be put out of the power of other men's " humour or prejudice, as well as their own, wants, " and will always want, a reason to prove. Would it " not I beseech you, to an indifferent by-stander, ap- " pear humour or prejudice, or something as bad; to " see men who profess a religion revealed from heaven, " and which they own contains all in it necessary to " salva-

" ſalvation, exclude men from their communion, and " perſecute them with the penalties of the civil law, for " not joining in the uſe of ceremonies, which are no- " where to be found in that revealed religion? Would " it not appear humour or prejudice, or ſome ſuch " thing, to a ſober impartial heathen, to ſee chriſtians " exclude and perſecute one of the ſame faith, for things " which they themſelves confeſs to be indifferent, and " not worth the contending for? Prejudice, humour, " paſſion, luſts, impreſſions of education, reverence and " admiration of perſons, worldly reſpects, love of their " own choice, and the like; to which you juſtly im- " pute many men's taking up and perſiſting in their re- " ligion; are indeed good words; and ſo, on the other " ſide, are theſe following, truth, the right way, en- " lightening, reaſon, ſound judgment; but they ſig- " nify nothing at all to your purpoſe, till you can evi- " dently and unqueſtionably ſhow the world, that the " latter, truth, and the right way, &c. are always, and " in all countries, to be found only in the national " church; and the former, viz. paſſion and prejudice, " &c. only amongſt the diſſenters. But to go on:

" Sometimes it is, To bring men to take ſuch care " as they ought of their ſalvation. What care is ſuch " as men ought to take, whilſt they are out of your " church, will be hard for you to tell me. But you " endeavour to explain yourſelf in the following words: " that they may not blindly leave it to the choice nei- " ther of any other perſon, nor yet of their own luſts " and paſſions, to preſcribe to them what faith or wor- " ſhip they ſhall embrace. You do well to make uſe " of puniſhment to ſhut paſſion out of the choice: be- " cauſe you know fear of ſuffering is no paſſion. But " let that paſs. You would have men puniſhed, to bring " them to take ſuch care of their ſalvation, that they " may not blindly leave it to the choice of any other " perſon to preſcribe to them. Are you ſincere? Are " you in earneſt? Tell me then truly: did the magiſ- " trate or the national church, any where, or yours in " particular, ever puniſh any man, to bring him to " have this care, which, you ſay, he ought to take of

" his ſalvation? Did you ever puniſh any man, that he " might not blindly leave it to the choice of his pariſh- " prieſt, or biſhop, or the convocation, what faith or " worſhip he ſhould embrace? It will be ſuſpected, " care of a party, or any thing elſe, rather than care " of the ſalvation of men's ſouls; if, having found out " ſo uſeful, ſo neceſſary a remedy, the only method " there is room left for, you will apply it but partially, " and make trial of it only on thoſe whom you have " truly leaſt kindneſs for. This will unavoidably give " one reaſon to imagine, you do not think ſo well of " your remedy as you pretend, who are ſo ſparing of it " to your friends; but are very free of it to ſtrangers, " who in other things are uſed very much like enemies. " But your remedy is like the helleboraſter, that grew " in the woman's garden, for the cure of worms in her " neighbours children: for truly it wrought too roughly " to give it to any of her own. Methinks your cha- " rity, in your preſent perſecution, is much-what as " prudent, as juſtifiable, as that good woman's. I hope " I have done you no injury, that I here ſuppoſe you " of the church of England; if I have, I beg your " pardon. It is no offence of malice, I aſſure you: " for I ſuppoſe no worſe of you, than I confeſs of my- " ſelf.

" Sometimes this puniſhment that you contend for, " is, to bring men to act according to reaſon and ſound " judgment:

Tertius è cœlo cecidit Cato.

" This is reformation indeed. If you can help us to " it, you will deſerve ſtatues to be erected to you, as " to the reſtorer of decayed religion. But if all men " have not reaſon and ſound judgment, will puniſhment " put it into them? Beſides, concerning this matter " mankind is ſo divided, that he acts according to rea- " ſon and ſound judgment at Augſburg, who would be " judged to do quite the contrary at Edinburgh. Will " puniſhment make men know what is reaſon and " ſound judgment? If it will not, it is impoſſible it

" ſhould

" ſhould make them act according to it. Reaſon and " found judgment are the elixir itſelf, the univerſal " remedy: and you may as reaſonably puniſh men to " bring them to have the philoſopher's ſtone, as to " bring them to act according to reaſon and ſound " judgment.

" Sometimes it is, To put men upon a ſerious and " impartial examination of the controverſy between the " magiſtrate and them, which is the way for them to " come to the knowledge of the truth. But what if " the truth be on neither ſide, as I am apt to imagine " you will think it is not; where neither the magiſ- " trate nor the diſſenter is either of them of your " church; how will the examining the controverſy be- " tween the magiſtrate and him be the way to come to " the knowledge of the truth? Suppoſe the controverſy " between a lutheran and a papiſt; or, if you pleaſe, " between a preſbyterian magiſtrate and a quaker ſub- " ject; will the examining the controverſy between the " magiſtrate and the diſſenting ſubject, in this caſe, " bring him to the knowledge of the truth? If you " ſay, Yes, then you grant one of theſe to have the " truth on his ſide. For the examining the contro- " verſy between a preſbyterian and a quaker, leaves the " controverſy either of them has with the church of " England, or any other church, untouched. And ſo " one, at leaſt, of thoſe being already come to the know- " ledge of the truth, ought not to be put under your " diſcipline of puniſhment; which is only to bring him " to the truth. If you ſay, No, and that the examin- " ing the controverſy between the magiſtrate and the " diſſenter, in this caſe, will not bring him to the know- " ledge of the truth; you confeſs your rule to be falſe, " and your method to no purpoſe.

" To conclude, your ſyſtem is, in ſhort, this: You " would have all men, laying aſide prejudice, humour, " paſſion, &c. examine the grounds of their religion, " and ſearch for the truth. This, I confeſs, is heartily " to be wiſhed. The means that you propoſe to make " men do this, is, that diſſenters ſhould be puniſhed " to make them do ſo. It is as if you had ſaid, men

" generally are guilty of a fault; therefore let one ſect, " who have the ill luck to be of an opinion different " from the magiſtrate, be puniſhed. This, at firſt ſight, " ſhocks any one who has the leaſt ſpark of ſenſe, rea- " ſon, or juſtice. But having ſpoken of this already, " and concluding that, upon ſecond thoughts, you your- " ſelf will be aſhamed of it; let us conſider it put ſo " as to be conſiſtent with common ſenſe, and with all " the advantage it can bear, and then let us ſee what " you can make of it. Men are negligent in examin- " ing the religions they embrace, refuſe, or perſiſt in; " therefore it is fit they ſhould be puniſhed to make " them do it. This is a conſequence indeed which may, " without defiance to common ſenſe, be drawn from it. " This is the uſe, the only uſe, which you think pu- " niſhment can indirectly and at a diſtance have in mat- " ters of religion. You would have men by puniſh- " ments driven to examine. What? Religion. To " what end? To bring them to the knowledge of the " truth. But I anſwer,

" Firſt, Every one has not the ability to do this.

" Secondly, Every one has not the opportunity to " do it.

" Would you have every poor proteſtant, for ex- " ample, in the palatinate, examine thoroughly whe- " ther the pope be infallible, or head of the church; " whether there be a purgatory; whether ſaints are to " be prayed to, or the dead prayed for; whether the " ſcripture be the only rule of faith; whether there be " no ſalvation out of the church; and whether there be " no church without biſhops; and an hundred other " things in controverſy between the papiſts and thoſe " proteſtants: and when he had maſtered theſe, go on " to fortify himſelf againſt the opinions and objections " of other churches he differs from? This, which is no " ſmall taſk, muſt be done, before a man can have " brought his religion to the bar of reaſon, and given " it a fair trial there. And if you will puniſh men " till this be done, the countryman muſt leave off plow- " ing and ſowing, and betake himſelf to the ſtudy of " Greek and Latin; and the artiſan muſt ſell his tools,

" to

" to buy fathers and ſchoolmen, and leave his family
" to ſtarve. If ſomething leſs than this will ſatisfy
" you, pray tell me what is enough. Have they con-
" ſidered and examined enough, if they are ſatisfied
" themſelves where the truth lies? If this be the limits
" of their examination, you will find few to puniſh;
" unleſs you will puniſh them to make them do what
" they have done already. For, however he came by
" his religion, there is ſcarce any one to be found who
" does not own himſelf ſatisfied that he is in the right.
" Or elſe, muſt they be puniſhed to make them con-
" ſider and examine, till they embrace that which you
" chooſe for truth? If this be ſo, what do you but in
" effect chooſe for them? when yet you would have
" men puniſhed, to bring them to ſuch a care of their
" ſouls that no other perſon might chooſe for them?
" If it be truth in general you would have them by
" puniſhments driven to ſeek; that is to offer matter
" of diſpute, and not a rule of diſcipline. For to
" puniſh any one to make him ſeek till he find truth,
" without a judge of truth, is to puniſh for you know
" not what; and is all one as if you ſhould whip a
" ſcholar to make him find out the ſquare root of a
" number you do not know. I wonder not therefore
" that you could not reſolve with yourſelf what degree
" of ſeverity you would have uſed, nor how long con-
" tinued; when you dare not ſpeak out directly whom
" you would have puniſhed, and are far from being
" clear to what end they ſhould be under penalties.

" Conſonant to this uncertainty, of whom, or what,
" to be puniſhed; you tell us, that there is no queſtion
" of the ſucceſs of this method. Force will certainly
" do, if duly proportioned to the deſign of it.

" What, I pray, is the deſign of it? I challenge you,
" or any man living, out of what you have ſaid in
" your book, to tell me directly what it is. In all
" other puniſhments that ever I heard of yet, till now
" that you have taught the world a new method, the
" deſign of them has been to cure the crime they are
" denounced againſt; and ſo I think it ought to be
" here. What, I beſeech you, is the crime here?

" Diſſenting? That you ſay not, any where, is a fault. " Beſides you tell us, that the magiſtrate hath not an " authority to compel any one to his religion. And " that you do not require that men ſhould have no rule " but the religion of the country. And the power you " aſcribe to the magiſtrate is given him to bring men, " not to his own, but to the true religion. If diſſenting " be not the fault; is it that a man does not examine " his own religion, and the grounds of it? Is that the " crime your puniſhments are deſigned to cure? Neither " that dare you ſay, leſt you diſpleaſe more than you " ſatisfy with your new diſcipline. And then again, " as I ſaid before, you muſt tell us how far you would " have them examine, before you puniſh them for not " doing it. And I imagine, if that were all we re- " quired of you, it would be long enough before you " would trouble us with a law, that ſhould preſcribe to " every one how far he was to examine matters of re- " ligion; wherein if he failed, and came ſhort, he " was to be puniſhed; if he performed, and went in " his examination to the bounds ſet by the law, he was " acquitted and free. Sir, when you conſider it again, " you will perhaps think this a caſe reſerved to the " great day, when the ſecrets of all hearts ſhall be laid " open. For I imagine it is beyond the power or " judgment of man, in that variety of circumſtances, " in reſpect of parts, tempers, opportunities, helps, " &c. men are in, in this world, to determine what is " every one's duty in this great buſineſs of ſearch, " inquiry, examination; or to know when any one has " done it. That which makes me believe you will be " of this mind, is, that where you undertake for the " ſucceſs of this method, if rightly uſed, it is with a " limitation, upon ſuch as are not altogether incurable. " So that when your remedy is prepared according to " art, (which art is yet unknown) and rightly applied, " and given in a due doſe, (all which are ſecrets) it " will then infallibly cure. Whom? All that are not " incurable by it. And ſo will a pippin-poſſet, eating " fiſh in lent, or a preſbyterian lecture certainly cure " all that are not incurable by them. For I am ſure

" you

" you do not mean it will cure all, but thoſe who are " abſolutely incurable; becauſe you yourſelf allow one " means left of cure, when yours will not do, viz. " The grace of God. Your words are, what means is " there left (except the grace of God) to reduce them, " but to lay thorns and briars in their way? And here " alſo, in the place we were conſidering, you tell us, " the incurable are to be left to God. Whereby, if " you mean they are to be left to thoſe means he has " ordained for men's converſion and ſalvation, yours " muſt never be made uſe of: for he indeed has pre- " ſcribed preaching and hearing of his word; but as " for thoſe who will not hear, I do not find any where " that he has commanded that they ſhould be compelled " or beaten to it."

I muſt beg my reader's pardon for ſo long a repetition, which I was forced to, that he might be judge whether what I there ſaid either deſerves no anſwer, or be fully anſwered in that paragraph, where you undertake to vindicate your method from all impracticableneſs and inconſiſtency chargeable upon it, in reference to the end for which you would have men puniſhed. Your words are: For what? By which, you ſay, " you perceive I " mean two things: for ſometimes I ſpeak of the fault, " and ſometimes of the end for which men are to be " puniſhed; (and ſometimes I plainly confound them.) " Now if it be inquired, for what fault men are to be " puniſhed? you anſwer, for rejecting the true religion, " after ſufficient evidence tendered them of the truth " of it; which certainly is a fault, and deſerves puniſh- " ment. But if I inquire for what end ſuch as do re- " ject the true religion, are to be puniſhed; you ſay, to " bring them to embrace the true religion; and in order " to that to bring them to conſider, and that carefully " and impartially, the evidence which is offered to " convince them of the truth of it, which are undeniably " juſt and excellent ends; and which, through God's " bleſſing, have often been procured, and may yet be " procured by convenient penalties inflicted for that " purpoſe. Nor do you know of any thing I ſay againſt " any part of this, which is not already anſwered."

Whether

Whether I in this confound two things diſtinct, or you diſtinguiſh where there is no difference, the reader may judge by what I have ſaid elſewhere. I ſhall here only conſider the ends of puniſhing, you here again in your reply to me aſſign; and thoſe, as I find them ſcattered, are theſe:

Sometimes you ſpeak of this end, as if it were "barely to gain a hearing to thoſe who by prayers and "intreaty cannot:" And thoſe may be the preachers of any religion. But I ſuppoſe you mean the preachers of the true religion. And who I beſeech you muſt be judge of that?

"Where the law provides ſufficient means of inſtruc-"tion for all, as well as puniſhment for diſſenters, it is "plain to all concerned, that the puniſhment is in-"tended to make them conſider." What? The means the law provides for their inſtruction. Who then is judge of what they are to be inſtructed in, and the means of inſtruction, but the law-maker?

"It is to bring men to hearken to inſtruction." From whom? From any body? "And to conſider and examine "matters of religion as they ought to do, and to bring "thoſe who are out of the right way to hear, conſider, "and embrace the truth." When is this end attained, and the penalties which are the means to this end taken off? When a man conforms to the national church. And who then is judge of what is the truth, to be embraced, but the magiſtrate?

"It is to bring men to conſider thoſe reaſons and "arguments which are proper and ſufficient to convince "them; but which, without being forced, they would "not conſider." And when have they done this? When they have once conformed: for after that there is no force uſed to make them conſider farther.

"It is to make men conſider as they ought;" and that, you tell us, is ſo to conſider, "as to be moved "heartily to embrace, and not to reject truth neceſſary "to ſalvation." And when is the magiſtrate, that has the care of men's ſouls, and does all this for their ſalvation, ſatisfied that they have ſo conſidered? As ſoon

ſoon as they outwardly join in communion with the national church.

" It is to bring men to conſider and examine thoſe " controverſies which they are bound to conſider and " examine, i. e. thoſe wherein they cannot err without " diſhonouring God, and endangering their own and " other men's ſalvations. And to ſtudy the true religion " with ſuch care and diligence as they might and ought " to uſe, and with an honeſt mind." And when, in your opinion, is it preſumable that any man has done all this? Even when he is in the communion of your church.

" It is to cure men's unreaſonable prejudices and " refractorineſs againſt, and averſion to, the true reli- " gion." Whereof none retain the leaſt tincture or ſuſpicion, who are once got within the pale of your church.

" It is to bring men into the right way, into the " way of ſalvation," which force does, when it has conducted them within the church-porch, and there leaves them.

" It is to bring men to embrace the truth that muſt " ſave them." And here in the paragraph wherein you pretend to tell us for what force is to be uſed, you ſay, " It is to bring men to embrace the true religion, and " in order to that to bring them to conſider, and that " carefully and impartially, the evidence which is " offered to convince them of the truth of it, which, " as you ſay, are undeniably juſt and excellent ends;" but yet ſuch as force in your method can never practically be made a means to, without ſuppoſing what you ſay you have no need to ſuppoſe, viz. That your religion is the true; unleſs you had rather every-where leave it to the magiſtrate to judge which is the right way, what is the true religion; which ſuppoſition, I imagine, will leſs accommodate you than the other. But take which of them you will you muſt add this other ſuppoſition to it, harder to be granted you than either of the former, viz. that thoſe who conform to your church here, if you make yourſelf the judge, or to the national church any where, if you make the magiſtrate

magiſtrate judge of the truth that muſt ſave men, and thoſe only, have attained theſe ends.

The magiſtrate, you ſay, is obliged to do what in him lies to bring all his ſubjects "to examine carefully "and impartially matters of religion, and to conſider "them as they ought, i. e. ſo as to embrace the truth "that muſt ſave them." The proper and neceſſary means, you ſay, to attain theſe ends is force. And your method of uſing this force is to puniſh all the diſſenters from the national religion, and none of thoſe who outwardly conform to it. Make this practicable now in any country in the world, without allowing the magiſtrate to be judge what is the truth that muſt ſave them, and without ſuppoſing alſo, that whoever do embrace the outward profeſſion of the national religion, do in their hearts embrace, i. e. believe and obey the truth that muſt ſave them; and then I think nothing in government can be too hard for your undertaking.

You conclude this paragraph in telling me, "You "do not know of any thing I ſay againſt any part of "this, which is not already anſwered." Pray tell me where it is you have anſwered thoſe objections I made to thoſe ſeveral ends which you aſſigned in your "Argu-"ment conſidered," and for which you would have force uſed, and which I have here reprinted again, becauſe I do not find you ſo much as take notice of them: and therefore the reader muſt judge whether they needed any anſwer or no.

But to ſhow that you have not here, where you promiſe and pretend to do it clearly and directly told us for what force and penalties are to be uſed, I ſhall in the next chapter examine what you mean "by bringing "men to embrace the true religion."

CHAP-

CHAPTER VII.

Of your bringing men to the true religion.

TRUE religion is on all hands acknowledged to be ſo much the concern and intereſt of all mankind, that nothing can be named, which ſo much effectually beſpeaks the approbation and favour of the public. The very entitling one's ſelf to that ſets a man on the right ſide. Who dares queſtion ſuch a cauſe, or oppoſe what is offered for the promoting the true religion? This advantage you have ſecured to yourſelf from inattentive readers as much as by the often repeated mention of the true religion is poſſible, there being ſcarce a page wherein the true religion does not appear, as if you had nothing elſe in your thoughts, but the bringing men to it for the ſalvation of their ſouls. Whether it be ſo in earneſt, we will now ſee.

You tell us, " Whatever hardſhips ſome falſe religions " may impoſe, it will however always be eaſier to " carnal and worldly-minded men, to give even their " firſt-born for their tranſgreſſions, than to mortify the " luſts from which they ſpring, which no religion but " the true requires of them." Upon this you ground the neceſſity of force to bring men to the true religion, and charge it on the magiſtrate as his duty to uſe it to that end. What now in appearance can expreſs greater care to bring men to the true religion? But let us ſee what you ſay in p. 64, and we ſhall find that in your ſcheme nothing leſs is meant: there you tell us, " The " magiſtrate inflicts the penalties only upon them that " break the laws:" and that law requiring nothing but conformity to the national religion, none but non-conformiſts are puniſhed. So that unleſs an outward profeſſion of the national religion be by the mortification of men's luſts harder than their giving their firſt-born

born for their tranſgreſſions, all the penalties you contend for concern not, nor can be intended to bring men effectually to the true religion; ſince they leave them before they come to the difficulty, which is to mortify their luſts, as the true religion requires. So that your bringing men to the true religion being to bring them to conformity to the national, for then you have done with force; how far that outward conformity is from being heartily of the true religion, may be known by the diſtance there is between the eaſieſt and the hardeſt thing in the world. For there is nothing eaſier, than to profeſs in words; nothing harder, than to ſubdue the heart, and bring thoughts and deeds into obedience of the truth: the latter is what is required to be of the true religion; the other all that is required by penalties your way applied. If you ſay, conformiſts to the national religion are required by the law civil and eccleſiaſtical to lead good lives, which is the difficult part of the true religion: I anſwer, theſe are not the laws we are here ſpeaking of, nor thoſe which the defenders of toleration complain of; but the laws that put a diſtinction between outward conformiſts and non-conformiſts: and thoſe they ſay, whatever may be talked of the true religion, can never be meant to bring men really to the true religion, as long as the true religion is, and is confeſſed to be, a thing of ſo much greater difficulty than outward conformity.

Miracles, ſay you, ſupplied the want of force in the beginning of chriſtianity; and therefore ſo far as they ſupplied that want, they muſt be ſubſervient to the ſame end. The end then was to bring men into the chriſtian church, into which they were admitted and received as brethren, when they acknowledged that Jeſus was the Chriſt, the ſon of God. Will that ſerve the turn? No: force muſt be uſed to make men embrace creeds and ceremonies, i. e. outwardly conform to the doctrine and worſhip of your church. Nothing more than that is required by your penalties; nothing leſs than that will excuſe from puniſhment: that, and nothing but that, will ſerve the turn; that therefore, and only that, is what

what you mean by the true religion you would have force uſed to bring men to.

When I tell you, " You have a very ill opinion of " the religion of the church of England, and muſt own " it can only be propagated and ſupported by force, if " you do not think it would be a gainer by a general " toleration all the world over :" You aſk, " Why you " may not have as good an opinion of the church of " England's, as you have of Noah's religion, not- " withſtanding you think it cannot now be propagated " or ſupported without uſing ſome kinds or degrees of " force." When you have proved that Noah's religion, that from eight perſons ſpread and continued in the world till the apoſtles times, as I have proved in another place, was propagated and ſupported all that while by your kinds or degrees of force, you may have ſome reaſon to think as well of the religion of the church of England, as you have of Noah's religion; though you think it cannot be propagated and ſupported without ſome kinds or degrees of force. But till you can prove that, you cannot upon that ground ſay you have reaſon to have ſo good an opinion of it.

You tell me, " If I will take your word for it, you " aſſure me you think there are many other countries " in the world beſides England, where my toleration " would be as little uſeful to truth as in England." If you will name thoſe countries, which will be no great pains, I will take your word for it, that you believe toleration there would be prejudicial to truth: but if you will not do that, neither I nor any body elſe can believe you. I will give you a reaſon why I ſay ſo, and that is, becauſe no-body can believe that, upon your principles, you can allow any national religion, differing from that of the church of England, to be true; and where the national religion is not true, we have already your conſent, as in Spain and Italy, &c. for toleration. Now that you cannot, without renouncing your own principles, allow any national religion, differing from that eſtabliſhed here by law, to be true, is evident: For why do you puniſh nonconformiſts here? " To " bring them, ſay you, to the true religion." But what

what if they hold nothing, but what that other differing national church does, ſhall they be nevertheleſs puniſhed if they conform not? You will certainly ſay, yes: and if ſo, then you muſt either ſay, they are not of the true religion; or elſe you muſt own you puniſh thoſe, to bring them to the true religion, whom you allow to be of the true religion already.

You tell me, "If I own with our author, that there "is but one true religion, and I owning myſelf to be of "the church of England, you cannot ſee how I can "avoid ſuppoſing, that the national religion now in "England, backed by the public authority of the law, "is the only true religion." If I own, as I do, all that you here expect from me, yet it will not ſerve to draw that concluſion from it, which you do, viz. That the national religion now in England is the only true religion; taking the true religion in the ſenſe that I do, and you ought to take it. I grant that there is but one true religion in the world, which is that whoſe doctrine and worſhip are neceſſary to ſalvation. I grant too that the true religion, neceſſary to ſalvation, is taught and profeſſed in the church of England: and yet it will not follow from hence, that the religion of the church of England, as eſtabliſhed by law, is the only true religion; if there be any thing eſtabliſhed in the church of England by law, and made part of its religion, which is not neceſſary to ſalvation, and which any other church, teaching and profeſſing all that is neceſſary to ſalvation, does not receive.

If the national religion now in England, backed by the authority of the law, be, as you would have it, the only true religion; ſo the only true religion, that a man cannot be ſaved without being of it; pray reconcile this with what you ſay in the immediately preceding paragraph, viz. "That there are many other countries "in the world where my toleration would be as little "uſeful as in England." For if there be other national religions differing from that of England, which you allow to be true, and wherein men may be ſaved, the national religion of England, as now eſtabliſhed by law, is not the only true religion, and men may be ſaved

ſaved without being of it. And then the magiſtrate can upon your principles have no authority to uſe force to bring men to be of it. For you tell us, force is not lawful, unleſs it be neceſſary; and therefore the magiſtrate can never lawfully uſe it, but to bring men to believe and practiſe what is neceſſary to ſalvation. You muſt therefore either hold, that there is nothing in the doctrine, diſcipline, and ceremonies of the church of England, as it is eſtabliſhed by law, but what is neceſſary to ſalvation: or elſe you muſt reform your terms of communion, before the magiſtrate upon your principles can uſe penalties to make men conſider till they conform; or you can ſay that the national religion of England is the only true religion, though it contain the only true religion in it; as poſſibly moſt, if not all, the differing chriſtian churches now in the world do.

You tell us farther in the next paragraph, "That "wherever this only true religion, i. e. the national "religion now in England, is received, all other reli-"gions ought to be diſcouraged." Why I beſeech you diſcouraged, if they be true any of them? For if they be true, what pretence is there for force to bring men who are of them to the true religion? If you ſay all other religions, varying at all from that of the church of England, are falſe; we know then your meaſure of the one only true religion. But that your care is only of conformity to the church of England, and that by the true religion you mean nothing elſe, appears too from your way of expreſſing yourſelf in this paſſage, where you own that you ſuppoſe that as this only true religion, to wit, the national religion now in England, backed with the public authority of law, "ought to be "received wherever it is preached; ſo wherever it is "received, all other religions ought to be diſcouraged "in ſome meaſure by the civil powers." If the religion eſtabliſhed by law in England, be the only true religion, ought it not to be preached and received everywhere, and all other religions diſcouraged throughout the world? and ought not the magiſtrates of all countries to take care that it ſhould be ſo? But you only ſay, wherever it is preached it ought to be received; and

wherever it is received, other religions ought to be discouraged, which is well suited to your scheme for enforcing conformity in England, but could scarce drop from a man whose thoughts were on the true religion, and the promoting of it in other parts of the world.

Force then must be used in England, and penalties laid on dissenters there. For what? "to bring them "to the true religion," whereby it is plain you mean not only the doctrine but discipline and ceremonies of the church of England, and make them a part of the only true religion: why else do you punish all dissenters for rejecting the true religion, and use force to bring them to it? When yet a great, if not the greatest, part of dissenters in England own and profess the doctrine of the church of England, as firmly as those in the communion of the church of England. They therefore, though they believe the same religion with you, are excluded from the true church of God, that you would have men brought to, and are amongst those who reject the true religion.

I ask whether they are not in your opinion out of the way of salvation, who are not joined in communion with the true church? and whether there can be any true church without bishops? If so, all but conformists in England that are of any church in Europe, beside the lutherans and papists, are out of the way of salvation; and so according to your system have need of force to be brought into it: and these too, one for their doctrine of transubstantiation, the other for that of consubstantiation, to omit other things vastly differing from the church of England, you will not, I suppose, allow to be of the true religion: and who then are left of the true religion but the church of England? For the abyssines have too wide a difference in many points for me to imagine, that is one of those places you mean where toleration would do harm as well as in England. And I think the religion of the greek church can scarce be supposed by you to be the true. For if it should, it would be a strong instance against your assertion, that the true religion cannot subsist, but would quickly be effectually extirpated without the assistance of authority; since

ſince this has ſubſiſted without any ſuch aſſiſtance now above two hundred years. I take it then for granted, and others with me cannot but do the ſame; till you tell us, what other religion there is of any church, but that of England, which you allow to be the true religion; that all you ſay of bringing men to the true religion, is only bringing them to the religion of the church of England. If I do you an injury in this, it will be capable of a very eaſy vindication: for it is but naming that other church differing from that of England, which you allow to have the true religion, and I ſhall yield myſelf convinced, and ſhall allow theſe words, viz. "The national religion now in England, backed "by the public authority of law, being the only true "religion," only as a little haſty ſally of your zeal. In the mean time I ſhall argue with you about the uſe of force to bring men to the religion of the church of England, as eſtabliſhed by law: ſince it is more eaſy to know what that is, than what you mean by the true religion, if you mean any thing elſe.

To proceed therefore; in the next place I tell you, by uſing force your way to bring men to the religion of the church of England, you mean only to bring them to an outward profeſſion of that religion; and that, as I have told you elſewhere, becauſe force uſed your way, being applied only to diſſenters, and ceaſing as ſoon as they conform, (whether it be intended by the law-maker for any thing more or no, which we have examined in another place) cannot be to bring men to any thing more than outward conformity. For if force be uſed to diſſenters, and them only, to bring men to the true religion, and always, as ſoon as it has brought men to conformity, it be taken off, and laid aſide, as having done all is expected from it; it is plain, that by bringing men to the true religion, and bringing them to outward conformity, you mean the ſame thing. You uſe and continue force upon diſſenters, becauſe you expect ſome effect from it: when you take it off, it has wrought that effect, or elſe being in your power, why do you not continue it on? The effect then that you talk of, being the embracing the true religion, and the thing you are

ſatisfied with, without any further puniſhment, expectation, or enquiry, being outward conformity, it is plain embracing the true religion and outward conformity, with you, are the ſame things.

Neither can you ſay it is preſumable that thoſe who outwardly conform do really underſtand, and inwardly in their hearts embrace with a lively faith and a ſincere obedience, the truth that muſt ſave them. 1. Becauſe it being, as you tell us, the magiſtrate's duty to do all that in him lies for the ſalvation of all his ſubjects, and it being in his power to examine, whether they know and live ſuitable to the truth that muſt ſave them, as well as conform; he can or ought no more to preſume, that they do ſo, without taking an account of their knowledge and lives, than he can or ought to preſume that they conform, without taking any account of their coming to church. Would you think that phyſician diſcharged his duty, and had, as was pretended, a care of men's lives; who having got them into his hands, and knowing no more of them, but that they come once or twice a week to the apothecary's ſhop, to hear what is preſcribed them, and ſit there a while; ſhould ſay it was preſumable they were recovered, without ever examining whether his preſcriptions had any effect, or what eſtate their health was in?

2. It cannot be preſumable, where there are ſo many viſible inſtances to the contrary. He muſt paſs for an admirable preſumer, who will ſeriouſly affirm that it is preſumable that all thoſe who conform to the national religion where it is true, do ſo underſtand, believe, and practiſe it, as to be in the way of ſalvation.

3. It cannot be preſumable, that men have parted with their corruption and luſts to avoid force, when they fly to conformity, which can ſhelter them from force without quitting their luſts. That which is dearer to men than their firſt-born, is, you tell us, their luſts; that which is harder than the hardſhips of falſe religions, is the mortifying thoſe luſts: here lies the difficulty of the true religion, that it requires the mortifying of thoſe luſts; and till that be done, men are not of the true relgion, nor in the way of ſalvation: and it is upon this

account only that you pretend force to be needful. Force is used to make them hear; it prevails, men hear: but that is not enough, because the difficulty lies not in that; they may hear arguments for the truth, and yet retain their corruption. They must do more, they must consider those arguments. Who requires it of them? The law that inflicts the punishment, does not; but this we may be sure their love of their lusts, and their hatred of punishment, requires of them, and will bring them to, viz. to consider how to retain their beloved lusts, and yet to avoid the uneasiness of the punishment they lie under; this is presumable they do; therefore they go one easy step farther, they conform, and then they are safe from force, and may still retain their corruption. Is it therefore presumable they have parted with their corruption, because force has driven them to take sanctuary against punishment in conformity, where force is no longer to molest them, or pull them from their darling inclinations? The difficulty in religion is, you say, for men to part with their lusts; this makes force necessary: men find out a way by conforming to avoid force without parting with their lusts; therefore it is presumable when they conform, that force which they can avoid without quitting their lusts, has made them part with them; which is indeed not to part with their lusts because of force, but to part with them gratis; which if you can say is presumable, the foundation of your need of force, which you place in the prevalency of corruption, and men's adhering to their lusts, will be gone, and so there will be no need of force at all. If the great difficulty in religion be for men to part with or mortify their lusts, and the only counterbalance in the other scale, to assist the true religion, to prevail against their lusts, be force; which I beseech you is presumable, if they can avoid force, and retain their lusts, that they should quit their lusts, and heartily embrace the true religion, which is incompatible with them; or else that they should avoid the force, and retain their lusts? To say the former of these, is to say that it is presumable, that they will quit their lusts, and heartily embrace the true religion for its own sake:

for he that heartily embraces the true religion, becauſe of a force which he knows he can avoid at pleaſure, without quitting his luſts, cannot be ſaid ſo to embrace it, becauſe of that force: ſince a force he can avoid without quitting his luſts, cannot be ſaid to aſſiſt truth in making him quit them: for in this truth has no aſſiſtance from it all. So that this is to ſay there is no need of force at all in the caſe.

Take a covetous wretch, whoſe heart is ſo ſet upon money, that he would give his firſt-born to ſave his bags; who is purſued by the force of the magiſtrate to an arreſt, and compelled to hear what is alleged againſt him; and the proſecution of the law threatening impriſonment or other puniſhment, if he do not pay the juſt debt which is demanded of him: if he enters himſelf in the King's-bench, where he can enjoy his freedom without paying the debt, and parting with his money; will you ſay that it is preſumable he did it to pay the debt, and not to avoid the force of the law? The luſt of the fleſh and pride of life are as ſtrong and prevalent as the luſt of the eye: and if you will deliberately ſay again, that it is preſumable, that men are driven by force to conſider, ſo as to part with their luſts, when no more is known of them, but that they do what diſcharges them from the force, without any neceſſity of parting with their luſts; I think I ſhall have occaſion to ſend you to my pagans and mahometans, but ſhall have no need to ſay any thing more to you of this matter myſelf.

I agree with you, that there is but one only true religion; I agree too that that one only true religion is profeſſed and held in the church of England; and yet I deny, if force may be uſed to bring men to that true religion, that upon your principles it can lawfully be uſed to bring men to the national religion in England, as eſtabliſhed by law; becauſe force, according to your own rule, being only lawful becauſe it is neceſſary, and therefore unfit to be uſed where not neceſſary, i. e. neceſſary to bring men to ſalvation; it can never be lawfully uſed to bring a man to any thing that is not neceſſary to ſalvation, as I have more fully ſhown in another

ther place. If therefore in the national religion of England, there be any thing put in as neceſſary to communion, that is, though true, yet not neceſſary to ſalvation; force cannot be lawfully uſed to bring men to that communion, though the thing ſo required in itſelf may perhaps be true.

There be a great many truths contained in ſcripture, which a man may be ignorant of, and conſequently not believe, without any danger to his ſalvation, or elſe very few would be capable of ſalvation: for I think I may truly ſay, there was never any one, but he that was the wiſdom of the Father, who was not ignorant of ſome, and miſtaken in others of them. To bring men therefore to embrace ſuch truths, the uſe of force by your own rule cannot be lawful: becauſe the belief or knowledge of thoſe truths themſelves not being neceſſary to ſalvation, there can be no neceſſity men ſhould be brought to embrace them, and ſo no neceſſity to uſe force to bring men to embrace them.

The only true religion which is neceſſary to ſalvation, may in one national church have that joined with it, which in itſelf is manifeſtly falſe and repugnant to ſalvation; in ſuch a communion no man can join without quitting the way to ſalvation. In another national church, with this only true religion may be joined what is neither repugnant nor neceſſary to ſalvation; and of ſuch there may be ſeveral churches differing from one another in confeſſions, ceremonies, and diſcipline, which are uſually called different religions; with either or each of which a good man, if ſatisfied in his own mind, may communicate without danger, whilſt another, not ſatisfied in conſcience concerning ſomething in the doctrine, diſcipline, or worſhip, cannot ſafely, nor without ſin, communicate with this or that of them. Nor can force be lawfully uſed, on your principles, to bring any man to either of them; becauſe ſuch things are required to their communion, which not being requiſite to ſalvation, men may ſeriouſly and conſcientiouſly differ, and be in doubt about, without endangering their ſouls.

That which here raiſes a noiſe, and gives a credit to it, whereby many are miſled into an unwarrantable zeal, is, that theſe are called different religions; and every one thinking his own the true, the only true, condemns all the reſt as falſe religions. Whereas thoſe who hold all things neceſſary to ſalvation, and add not thereto any thing in doctrine, diſcipline, or worſhip, inconſiſtent with ſalvation, are of one and the ſame religion, though divided into different ſocieties or churches, under different forms: which whether the paſſion and polity of deſigning; or the ſober and pious intention of well-meaning men, ſet up; they are no other than the contrivances of men, and ſuch they ought to be eſteemed in whatſoever is required in them, which God has not made neceſſary to ſalvation, however in its own nature it may be indifferent, lawful, or true. For none of the articles, or confeſſions of any church, that I know, containing in them all the truths of religion, though they contain ſome that are not neceſſary to ſalvation; to garble thus the truths of religion, and by their own authority take ſome not neceſſary to ſalvation, and make them the terms of communion, and leave out others as neceſſary to be known and believed; is purely the contrivance of men: God never having appointed any ſuch diſtinguiſhing ſyſtem: nor, as I have ſhowed, can force, upon your principles, lawfully be uſed to bring men to embrace it.

Concerning ceremonies, I ſhall here only aſk you whether you think kneeling at the Lord's Supper, or the croſs in baptiſm, are neceſſary to ſalvation? I mention theſe as having been matter of great ſcruple: if you will not ſay they are, how can you ſay that force can be lawfully uſed to bring men into a communion, to which theſe are made neceſſary? If you ſay, Kneeling is neceſſary to a decent uniformity, (for of the croſs in baptiſm I have ſpoken elſewhere) though that ſhould be true, yet it is an argument you cannot uſe for it, if you are of the church of England: for if a decent uniformity may be well enough preſerved without kneeling at prayer, where decency requires it at leaſt as much

much as at receiving the ſacrament, why may it not well enough be preſerved without kneeling at the ſacrament? Now that uniformity is thought ſufficiently preſerved without kneeling at prayer, is evident by the various poſtures men are at liberty to uſe, and may be generally obſerved, in all our congregations, during the miniſter's prayer in the pulpit before and after his ſermon, which it ſeems can conſiſt well enough with decency and uniformity; though it be a prayer addreſſed to the great God of heaven and earth; to whoſe majeſty it is that the reverence to be expreſſed in our geſtures is due, when we put up petitions to him, who is invariably the ſame, in what or whoſe words ſoever we addreſs ourſelves to him.

The preface to the Book of Common-Prayer tells us, "That the rites and ceremonies appointed to be uſed "in divine worſhip, are things in their own nature in-"different and alterable." Here I aſk you, whether any human power can make any thing, in its own nature indifferent, neceſſary to ſalvation? If it cannot, then neither can any human power be juſtified in the uſe of force, to bring men to conformity in the uſe of ſuch things. If you think men have authority to make any thing, in itſelf indifferent, a neceſſary part of God's worſhip, I ſhall deſire you to conſider what our author ſays of this matter, which has not yet deſerved your notice.

"The miſapplying his power, you ſay, is a ſin in "the magiſtrate, and lays him open to divine venge-"ance." And is it not a miſapplying of his power, and a ſin in him, to uſe force to bring men to ſuch a compliance in an indifferent thing, which in religious worſhip may be a ſin to them? Force, you ſay, may be uſed to puniſh thoſe who diſſent from the communion of the church of England. Let us ſuppoſe now all its doctrines not only true, but neceſſary to ſalvation; but that there is put into the terms of its communion ſome indifferent action which God has not enjoined, nor made a part of his worſhip, which any man is perſuaded in his conſcience not to be lawful; ſuppoſe kneeling at the ſacrament, which having been ſuperſtitiouſly uſed

in

in adoration of the bread, as the real body of Chriſt, may give occaſion of ſcruple to ſome now, as well as eating of fleſh offered to idols did to others in the apoſtles time; which though lawful in itſelf, yet the apoſtle ſaid, "he would eat no fleſh while the world ſtandeth, "rather than to make his weak brother offend," 1 Cor. viii. 13. And if to lead, by example, the ſcrupulous into any action, in itſelf indifferent, which they thought unlawful, be a ſin, as appears at large, Rom. xiv. how much more is it to add force to our example, and to compel men by puniſhments to that, which, though indifferent in itſelf, they cannot join in without ſinning? I deſire you to ſhow me how force can be neceſſary in ſuch a caſe, without which you acknowledge it not to be lawful. Not to kneel at the Lord's Supper, God not having ordained it, is not a ſin; and the apoſtles receiving it in the poſture of ſitting or lying, which was then uſed at meat, is an evidence it may be received not kneeling. But to him that thinks kneeling is unlawful, it is certainly a ſin. And for this you may take the authority of a very judicious and reverend prelate of our church, in theſe words: "Where a man is miſ-"taken in his judgment, even in that caſe, it is always "a ſin to act againſt it; by ſo doing, he wilfully acts "againſt the beſt light which at preſent he has for the "direction of his actions." Diſc. of Conſcience, p. 18. I need not here repeat his reaſons, having already quoted him above more at large; though the whole paſſage, writ, as he uſes, with great ſtrength and clearneſs, deſerves to be read and conſidered. If therefore the magiſtrate enjoins ſuch an unneceſſary ceremony, and uſes force to bring any man to a ſinful communion with our church in it, let me aſk you, doth he ſin or miſapply his power or no?

True and falſe religions are names that eaſily engage men's affections on the hearing of them; the one being the averſion, the other the deſire, at leaſt as they perſuade themſelves, of all mankind. This makes men forwardly give into theſe names, wherever they meet with them; and when mention is made of bringing men from a falſe to the true religion, very often without knowing

knowing what is meant by thoſe names, they think nothing can be done too much in ſuch a buſineſs, to which they entitle God's honour, and the ſalvation of men's ſouls.

I ſhall therefore deſire of you, if you are that fair and ſincere lover of truth you profeſs, when you write again, to tell us what you mean by true, and what by a falſe religion, that we may know which in your ſenſe are ſo: for, as you now have uſed theſe words in your treatiſe, one of them ſeems to ſtand only for the religion of the church of England, and the other for that of all other churches. I expect here you ſhould make the ſame outcries againſt me, as you have in your former letter, for impoſing a ſenſe upon your words contrary to your meaning; and for this you will appeal to your own words in ſome other places: but of this I ſhall leave the reader to judge, and tell him, this is a way very eaſy and very uſual for men, who having not clear and conſiſtent notions, keep themſelves as much as they can under the ſhelter of general and variouſly applicable terms; that they may ſave themſelves from the abſurdities or conſequences of one place, by a help from ſome general or contrary expreſſion in another: whether it be a deſire of victory, or a little too warm zeal for a cauſe you have been hitherto perſuaded of, which hath led you into this way of writing; I ſhall only mind you, that the cauſe of God requires nothing, but what may be ſpoken out plainly in a clear determined ſenſe, without any reſerve or cover. In the mean time this I ſhall leave with you as evident, that force upon your ground cannot be lawfully uſed to bring men to the communion of the church of England; (that being all that I can find you clearly mean by the true religion) till you have proved that all that is required of one in that communion, is neceſſary to ſalvation.

However therefore you tell us, "That convenient "force uſed to bring men to the true religion, is all "that you contend for, and all that you allow." That it is for "promoting the true religion." That it is to "bring men to conſider, ſo as not to reject the truth ne"ceſſary to ſalvation. To bring men to embrace the "truth

" truth that must save them." And abundance more to this purpose. Yet all this talk of the true religion amounting to no more but the national religion established by law in England; and your bringing men to it, to no more than bringing them to an outward profession of it; it would better have suited that condition, viz. without prejudice, and with an honest mind, which you require in others, to have spoke plainly what you aimed at, rather than prepossess men's minds in favour of your cause, by the impressions of a name that in truth did not properly belong to it.

It was not therefore without ground that I said, " I " suspected you built all on this lurking supposition, " that the national religion now in England, backed by " the public authority of the law, is the only true re- " ligion, and therefore no other is to be tolerated; " which being a supposition equally unavoidable, and " equally just in other countries; unless we can ima- " gine, that, every-where but in England, men believe " what at the same time they think to be a lye," &c. Here you erect your plumes, and to this your triumphant logic gives you not patience to answer, without an air of victory in the entrance: " How, sir, is this suppo- " sition equally unavoidable, and equally just in other " countries, where false religions are the national? (for " that you must mean, or nothing to the purpose.)" Hold, sir, you go too fast; take your own system with you, and you will perceive it will be enough to my purpose, if I mean those religions which you take to be false: for if there be any other national churches, which agreeing with the church of England in what is necessary to salvation, yet have established ceremonies different from those of the church of England; should not any one who dissented here from the church of England upon that account, as preferring that to our way of worship, be justly punished? If so, then punishment in matters of religion being only to bring men to the true religion; you must suppose him not to be yet of it; and so the national church he approves of not to be of the true religion. And yet is it not equally unavoidable, and equally just, that that church should suppose its

its religion the only true religion, as it is that yours ſhould do ſo; it agreeing with yours in things neceſſary to ſalvation, and having made ſome things, in their own nature indifferent, requiſite to conformity for decency and order, as you have done? So that my ſaying, It is equally unavoidable, and equally juſt in other countries; will hold good, without meaning what you charge on me, that that ſuppoſition is equally unavoidable, and equally juſt where the national religion is abſolutely falſe.

But in that large ſenſe too, what I ſaid will hold good; and you would have ſpared your uſeleſs ſubtilties againſt it, if you had been as willing to take my meaning, and anſwer my argument, as you were to turn what I ſaid to a ſenſe which the words themſelves ſhow I never intended. My argument in ſhort was this, That granting force to be uſeful to propagate and ſupport religion, yet it would be no advantage to the true religion, that you, a member of the church of England, ſuppoſing yours to be the true religion, ſhould thereby claim a right to uſe force; ſince ſuch a ſuppoſition to thoſe who were members of other churches, and believed other religions, was equally unavoidable, and equally juſt. And the reaſon I annexed, ſhows both this to be my meaning, and my aſſertion to be true: my words are, "Unleſs we can imagine that, every-where but in "England, men believe what at the ſame time they "think to be a lye." Having therefore never ſaid, nor thought that it is equally unavoidable, or equally juſt, that men in every country ſhould believe the national religion of the country: but that it is equally unavoidable, and equally juſt, that men believing the national religion of their country, be it true or falſe, ſhould ſuppoſe it to be true; and let me here add alſo, ſhould endeavour to propagate it: however you go on thus to reply: "If ſo, then I fear it will be equally "true too, and equally rational: for otherwiſe I ſee "not how it can be equally unavoidable, or equally "juſt: for if it be not equally true, it cannot be equally "juſt; and if it be not equally rational, it cannot be "equally unavoidable. But if it be equally true, and

"equally

" equally rational, then either all religions are true, " or none is true: for if they be all equally true, and " one of them be not true, then none of them can be " true." I challenge any one to put these four good words, unavoidable, just, rational, and true, more equally together, or to make a better-wrought deduction: but after all, my argument will nevertheless be good, that it is no advantage to your cause, for you or any one of it, to suppose yours to be the only true religion; since it is equally unavoidable, and equally just for any one, who believes any other religion, to suppose the same thing. And this will always be so, till you can show, that men cannot receive false religions upon arguments that appear to them to be good; or that having received falshood under the appearance of truth, they can, whilst it so appears, do otherwise than value it, and be acted by it, as if it were true. For the equality that is here the question, depends not upon the truth of the opinion embraced; but on this, that the light and persuasion a man has at present, is the guide which he ought to follow, and which in his judgment of truth he cannot avoid to be governed by. And therefore the terrible consequences you dilate on in the following part of that page I leave you for your private use on some fitter occasion.

You therefore who are so apt, without cause, to complain of want of ingenuity in others; will do well hereafter to consult your own, and another time change your style; and not under the undefined name of the true religion, because that is of more advantage to your argument, mean only the religion established by law in England, shutting out all other religions now professed in the world. Though when you have defined what is the true religion, which you would have supported and propagated by force; and have told us it is to be found in the liturgy and thirty-nine articles of the church of England; and it be agreed to you, that that is the only true religion; your argument of force, as necessary to men's salvation, from the want of light and strength enough in the true religion to prevail against men's lusts, and the corruption of their nature, will not hold; be-

cause

cauſe your bringing men by force, your way applied, to the true religion, be it what you will, is but bringing them to an outward conformity to the national church. But the bringing them ſo far, and no farther, having no oppoſition to their luſts, no inconſiſtency with their corrupt nature, is not on that account at all neceſſary, nor does at all help, where only, on your grounds, you ſay, there is need of the aſſiſtance of force towards their ſalvation.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of ſalvation to be procured by force, your way.

THERE cannot be imagined a more laudable deſign than the promoting the ſalvation of men's ſouls, by any one who ſhall undertake it. But if it be a pretence made uſe of to cover ſome other bye-intereſt; nothing can be more odious to men, nothing more provoking to the great God of heaven and earth, nothing more miſbecoming the name and character of a chriſtian. With what intention you took your pen in hand to defend and encourage the uſe of force in the buſineſs of men's ſalvation, it is fit in charity we take your word; but what your ſcheme, as you have delivered it, is guilty of, it is my buſineſs to take notice of, and repreſent to you.

To my ſaying, that "if perſecution, as is pretended, "were for the ſalvation of men's ſouls, bare con- "formity would not ſerve the turn, but men ſhould "be examined whether they do it upon reaſon and con- "viction:" you anſwer, "Who they be that pretend "that perſecution is for the ſalvation of men's ſouls, "you know not." Whatever you know not, I know one, who in the letter under conſideration pleads for force, as uſeful for the promoting "the ſalvation of "men's ſouls: and that the uſe of force is no other "means

" means for the salvation of men's souls, than what the " author and finisher of our faith has directed. That " so far is the magistrate, when he gives his helping " hand to the furtherance of the gospel, by laying con- " venient penalties upon such as reject it, or any part " of it, from using any other means for the salvation " of men's souls than what the author and finisher of " our faith has directed, that he does no more than his " duty for the promoting the salvation of souls. And " as the means by which men may be brought into the " way of salvation." Ay, but where do you say that persecution is for the salvation of souls? I thought you had been arguing against my meaning, and against the things I say, and not against my words in your meaning, which is not against me. That I used the word persecution for what you call force and penalties, you know: for in p. 21, that immediately precedes this, you take notice of it, with some little kind of wonder, in these words, " persecution, so it seems you call all punish- " ments for religion." That I do so then, whether properly or improperly, you could not be ignorant; and then, I beseech you, apply your answer here to what I say: my words are, " If persecution, as is pretended, " were for the salvation of men's souls, men that con- " form would be examined whether they did so upon " reason and conviction." Change my word persecution into punishment for religion, and then consider the truth or ingenuity of your answer: for, in that sense of the word persecution, do you know no-body that pretends persecution is for the salvation of men's souls? So much for your ingenuity, and the arts you allow yourself to serve a good cause. What do you think of one of my pagans or mahometans? Could he have done better? For I shall often have occasion to mind you of them. Now to your argument. I said, " That I thought those who make laws, and use force, " to bring men to church-conformity in religion, seek " only the compliance, but concern themselves not for " the conviction of those they punish, and so never " use force to convince. For pray tell me, when any " dissenter conforms, and enters into the church com-

" munion,

" munion, is he ever examined to see whether he does " it upon reason and conviction, and such grounds as " would become a christian concerned for religion? If " persecution, as is pretended, were for the salvation " of men's souls, this would be done, and men not " driven to take the sacrament to keep their places, or " obtain licences to sell ale; for so low have these holy " things been prostituted." To this you here reply, " As to those magistrates, who having provided sufficiently for the instruction of all under their care, in " the true religion, do make laws, and use moderate " penalties, to bring men to the communion of the " church of God, and conformity to the rules and " orders of it; I think their behaviour does plainly " enough speak them to seek and concern themselves " for the conviction of those whom they punish, and " for their compliance only as the fruit of their conviction." If means of instruction were all that is necessary to convince people, the providing sufficiently for instruction would be an evidence, that those that did so, did seek and concern themselves for men's conviction: but if there be something as necessary for conviction as the means of instruction, and without which those means will signify nothing, and that be severe and impartial examination; and if force be, as you say, so necessary to make men thus examine, that they can by no other way but force be brought to do it: if magistrates do not lay their penalties on non-examination, as well as provide means of instruction; whatever you may say you think, few people will find reason to believe you think those magistrates seek and concern themselves much for the conviction of those they punish, when that punishment is not levelled at that, which is a hindrance to their conviction, i. e. against their aversion to severe and impartial examination. To that aversion no punishment can be pretended to be a remedy, which does not reach and combat the aversion; which it is plain no punishment does, which may be avoided without parting with, or abating the prevalency of that aversion. This is the case, where men undergo punishments for not conforming, which they may be rid of, with-

out ſeverely and impartially examining matters of religion.

To ſhow that what I mentioned was no ſign of unconcernedneſs in the magiſtrate for men's conviction; you add, "Nor does the contrary appear from the not "examining diſſenters when they conform, to ſee "whether they do it upon reaſon and conviction: for "where ſufficient inſtruction is provided, it is ordinarily "preſumable that when diſſenters conform, they do it "upon reaſon and conviction." Here if ordinarily ſignifies any thing, (for it is a word you make much uſe of, whether to expreſs or cover your ſenſe, let the reader judge,) then you ſuppoſe there are caſes wherein it is not preſumable; and I aſk you, whether in thoſe, or any caſes, it be examined whether diſſenters, when they conform, do it upon reaſon and conviction? At beſt that it is ordinarily preſumable, is but gratis dictum; eſpecially ſince you ſuppoſe, that it is the corruption of their nature that hinders them from conſidering as they ought, ſo as upon reaſon and conviction to embrace the truth: which corruption of nature, that they may retain with conformity I think is very preſumable. But be that as it will, this I am ſure is ordinarily and always preſumable, that if thoſe who uſe force were as intent upon men's conviction, as they are on their conformity, they would not wholly content themſelves with the one, without ever examining and looking into the other.

Another excuſe you make for this neglect, is, "That "as to irreligious perſons who only ſeek their ſecular "advantage, how eaſy it is for them to pretend con-"viction, and to offer ſuch grounds (if that were "required) as would become a chriſtian concerned for "religion; that is what no care of man can certainly "prevent." This is an admirable juſtification of your hypotheſis. Men are to be puniſhed: to what end? To make them ſeverely and impartially conſider matters of religion, that they may be convinced, and thereupon ſincerely embrace the truth. But what need of force or puniſhment for this? Becauſe their luſts and corruption will otherwiſe keep them both from conſidering as they ought, and embracing the true religion; and there-

fore

fore they muſt lie under penalties till they have conſidered as they ought, which is when they have upon conviction embraced. But how ſhall the magiſtrate know when they upon conviction embrace, that he may then take off their penalties? That indeed cannot be known, and ought not to be inquired after, becauſe irreligious perſons who only ſeek their ſecular advantage; or, in other words, all thoſe who deſire at their eaſe to retain their beloved luſts and corruption; may, "eaſily "pretend conviction, and offer ſuch grounds (if it "were required) as would become a chriſtian concerned "for religion: this is what no care of man can cer-"tainly prevent." Which is reaſon enough, why no buſy forwardneſs in man to diſeaſe his brother, ſhould uſe force upon pretence of prevailing againſt men's corruptions, that hinder their conſidering and embracing the truth upon conviction, when it is confeſſed, it cannot be known, whether they have conſidered, are convinced, or have really embraced the true religion or no. And thus you have ſhown us your admirable remedy, which is not it ſeems for the irreligious, (for it is eaſy, you ſay, for them to pretend to conviction, and ſo avoid puniſhment) but for thoſe who would be religious without it.

But here, in this caſe, as to the intention of the magiſtrate, how can it be ſaid, that the force he uſes is deſigned, by ſubduing men's corruptions, to make way for conſidering and embracing the truth; when it is ſo applied, that it is confeſſed here, that a man may get rid of the penalties without parting with the corruptions they are pretended to be uſed againſt? But you have a ready anſwer, "This is what no care of man "can certainly prevent;" which is but in other words to proclaim the ridiculouſneſs of your uſe of force, and to avow that your method can do nothing. If by not certainly you mean, it may any way or to any degree prevent; why is it not ſo done? If not, why is a word that ſignifies nothing put in, unleſs it be for a ſhelter on occaſion? a benefit you know how to draw from this way of writing: but this here, taken how you pleaſe, will only ſerve to lay blame on the magiſtrate, or

your hypotheſis, chooſe you whether. I for my part have a better opinion of the ability and management of the magiſtrate: what he aimed at in his laws, that I believe he mentions in them; and, as wiſe men do in buſineſs, ſpoke out plainly what he had a mind ſhould be done. But certainly there cannot a more ridiculous character be put on law-makers, than to tell the world they intended to make men conſider, examine, &c. but yet neither required nor named any thing in their laws but conformity. Though yet when men are certainly to be puniſhed for not really embracing the true religion, there ought to be certain matters of fact, whereby thoſe that do, and thoſe that do not ſo embrace the truth, ſhould be diſtinguiſhed; and for that you have, it is true, a clear and eſtabliſhed criterion, i. e. conformity and nonconformity: which do very certainly diſtinguiſh the innocent from the guilty; thoſe that really and ſincerely do embrace the truth that muſt ſave them, from thoſe that do not.

But, ſir, to reſolve the queſtion, whether the conviction of men's underſtandings, and the ſalvation of their ſouls, be the buſineſs and aim of thoſe who uſe force to bring men into the profeſſion of the national religion; I aſk, whether if that were ſo, there could be ſo many as there are, not only in moſt country pariſhes, but, I think I may ſay, may be found in all parts of England, groſly ignorant in the doctrines and principles of the chriſtian religion, if a ſtrict inquiry were made into it? If force be neceſſary to be uſed to bring men to ſalvation, certainly ſome part of it would find out ſome of the ignorant and unconſidering that are in the national church, as well as it does ſo diligently all the nonconformiſts out of it, whether they have conſidered, or are knowing or no. But to this you give a very ready anſwer: "Would you have the magiſtrate puniſh "all indifferently, thoſe who obey the law as well as "them that do not?" What is the obedience the law requires? That you tell us in theſe words, "If the "magiſtrate provides ſufficiently for the inſtruction of "all his ſubjects in the true religion, and then requires "them all under convenient penalties to hearken to "the

" the teachers and miniſters of it, and to profeſs and " exerciſe it with one accord under their direction in " public aſſemblies :" which in other words is but conformity; which here you expreſs a little plainer in theſe words: " But as to thoſe magiſtrates who, having pro- " vided ſufficiently for the inſtruction of all under their " care in the true religion, do make laws, and uſe mo- " derate penalties to bring men to the communion of " the church of God, and to conform to the rules and " orders of it." You add, " Is there any pretence to " ſay that in ſo doing, he [the magiſtrate] applies force " only to a part of his ſubjects, when the law is general, " and excepts none?" There is no pretence, I confeſs, to ſay that in ſo doing he applies force only to a part of his ſubjects, to make them conformiſts; from that it is plain the law excepts none. But if conformiſts may be ignorant, groſly ignorant of the principles and doctrines of chriſtianity; if there be no penalties uſed to make them conſider as they ought, ſo as to underſtand, be convinced of, believe and obey the truths of the goſpel; are not they exempt from that force which you ſay " is to make men conſider and examine matters of reli- " gion as they ought to do?" Force is applied to all indeed to make them conformiſts; but if being conformiſts once, and frequenting the places of public worſhip, and there ſhowing an outward compliance with the ceremonies preſcribed; (for that is all the law requires of all, call it how you pleaſe) they are exempt from all force and penalties, though they are ever ſo ignorant, ever ſo far from underſtanding, believing, receiving the truth of the goſpel; I think it is evident that then force is not applied to all " to procure the " conviction of the underſtanding.—To bring men to " conſider thoſe reaſons and arguments which are proper " to convince the mind, and which without being " forced they would not conſider.—To bring men to " that conſideration, which nothing elſe but force (be- " ſides the extraordinary grace of God) would bring " them to.—To make men good chriſtians.—To make " men receive inſtruction.—To cure their averſion to " the true religion.—To bring men to conſider and

" examine the controverſies which they are bound to " conſider and examine, i. e. thoſe wherein they can- " not err without diſhonouring God, and endangering " their own and other men's eternal ſalvation.—To " weigh matters of religion carefully and impartially.— " To bring men to the true religion and to ſalvation." —That then force is not applied to all the ſubjects for theſe ends, I think you will not deny. Theſe are the ends for which you tell us in the places quoted, that force is to be uſed in matters of religion: it is by its uſefulneſs and neceſſity to theſe ends, that you tell us the magiſtrate is authorized and obliged to uſe force in matters of religion. Now if all theſe ends be not attained by a bare conformity, and yet if by a bare conformity men are wholly exempt from all force and penalties in matters of religion; will you ſay that for theſe ends force is applied to all the magiſtrate's ſubjects? If you will, I muſt ſend you to my pagans and mahometans for a little conſcience and modeſty. If you confeſs force is not applied to all for theſe ends, notwithſtanding any laws obliging all to conformity; you muſt alſo confeſs, that what you ſay concerning the laws being general, is nothing to the purpoſe; ſince all that are under penalties for not conforming, are not under any penalties for ignorance, irreligion, or the want of thoſe ends for which you ſay penalties are uſeful and neceſſary.

You go on, " And therefore if ſuch perſons profane " the ſacrament to keep their places, or to obtain li- " cences to ſell ale, this is an horrible wickedneſs." I excuſe them not. " But it is their own, and they " alone muſt anſwer for it." Yes, and thoſe who threatened poor ignorant and irreligious ale-ſellers, whoſe livelihood it was, to take away their licences, if they did not conform and receive the ſacrament; may be thought perhaps to have ſomething to anſwer for. You add, " But it is very unjuſt to impute it to thoſe who " make ſuch laws, and uſe ſuch force, or to ſay that " they proſtitute holy things, and drive men to pro- " fane them." Nor is it juſt to inſinuate in your anſwer, as if that had been ſaid which was not. But if it

it be true, that a poor ignorant, looſe, irreligious wretch ſhould be threatened to be turned out of his calling and livelihood, if he would not take the ſacrament: may it not be ſaid theſe holy things have been ſo low proſtituted? And if this be not profaning them, pray tell me what is?

This I think may be ſaid without injuſtice to any body, that it does not appear, that thoſe who make ſtrict laws for conformity, and take no care to have it examined upon what grounds men conform; are not very much concerned, that men's underſtandings ſhould be convinced: and though you go on to ſay, that "they "deſign by their laws to do what lies in them to make "men good chriſtians:" that will ſcarce be believed, if what you ſay be true, that force is neceſſary to bring "thoſe who cannot be otherwiſe brought to it, to ſtudy "the true religion, with ſuch care and diligence as "they might and ought to uſe, and with an honeſt "mind." And yet we ſee a great part, or any of thoſe who are ignorant in the true religion, have no ſuch force applied to them; eſpecially ſince you tell us, in the ſame place, that "no man ever ſtudied the true religion with "ſuch care and diligence as he might and ought to uſe, "and with an honeſt mind, but he was convinced of "the truth of it." If then force and penalties can produce that ſtudy, care, diligence, and honeſt mind, which will produce knowledge and conviction; and that (as you ſay in the following words) make good men; I aſk you, if there be found in the communion of the church, exempt from force upon the account of religion, ignorant, irreligious, ill men; and that, to ſpeak moderately, not in great diſproportion fewer than amongſt the nonconformiſts; will you believe yourſelf, when you ſay "the magiſtrates do by their laws all that "in them lies to make them good chriſtians;" when they uſe not that force to them which you, not I, ſay is neceſſary: and that they are, where it is neceſſary, obliged to uſe? And therefore I give you leave to repeat again the words you ſubjoin here, "But if after all they "(i. e. the magiſtrates) can do, wicked and godleſs men "will ſtill reſolve to be ſo; they will be ſo, and I

" know not who but God Almighty can help it." But this being ſpoken of conformiſts, on whom the magiſtrates lay no penalties, uſe no force for religion, give me leave to mind you of the ingenuity of one of my pagans or mahometans.

You tell us, That the uſefulneſs of force to make ſcholars learn, authorizes ſchoolmaſters to uſe it. And would you not think a ſchoolmaſter diſcharged his duty well, and had a great care of their learning, who uſed his rod only to bring boys to ſchool; but if they come there once a week, whether they ſlept or only minded their play, never examined what proficiency they made, or uſed the rod to make them ſtudy and learn, though they would not apply themſelves without it?

But to ſhow you how much you yourſelf are in earneſt for the ſalvation of ſouls in this your method, I ſhall ſet down what I ſaid, p. 396, of my letter on that ſubject, and what you anſwer, p. 68, of yours.

L. II. p. 129. " You ſpeak of " it here as the moſt deplorable " condition imaginable, that men " ſhould be left to themſelves, and " not be forced to conſider and " examine the grounds of their " religion, and ſearch impartially " and diligently after the truth. " This you make the great miſ- " carriage of mankind; and for " this you ſeem ſolicitous, all " through your treatiſe, to find " out a remedy; and there is ſcarce " a leaf wherein you do not offer " yours. But what if after all, " now you ſhould be found to pre- " varicate? Men have contrived " to themſelves, ſay you, a great " variety of religions. It is grant- " ed. They ſeek not the truth in " this matter with that applica- " tion of mind, and freedom of " judg-

L. III. p. 68. Your next paragraph runs high, and charges me with nothing leſs than prevarication. For whereas, as you tell me, I ſpeak of it here as the moſt deplorable condition imaginable, that men ſhould be left to themſelves, and not be forced to conſider and examine the grounds of their religion, and ſearch impartially and diligently after the truth, &c. It ſeems all the remedy I offer, is no more than this, " Diſſenters " muſt

" judgment which is requiſite: it " is confeſſed. All the falſe religions now on foot in the world, " have taken their riſe from the " ſlight and partial conſideration, " which men have contented themſelves with in ſearching after the " true; and men take them up, " and perſiſt in them for want of " due examination: be it ſo. There " is need of a remedy for this; " and I have found one whoſe ſucceſs cannot be queſtioned: very " well. What is it? Let us hear " it. Why, diſſenters muſt be " puniſhed. Can any body that " hears you ſay ſo, believe you in " earneſt; and that want of examination is the thing you would " have amended, when want of " examination is not the thing you " would have puniſhed? If want " of examination be the fault, want " of examination muſt be puniſhed; if you are, as you pretend, " fully ſatisfied that puniſhment " is the proper and only means to " remedy it. But if in all your " treatiſe you can ſhow me one " place where you ſay that the ignorant, the careleſs, the inconſiderate, the negligent in examining thoroughly the truth of " their own and others religion, " &c. are to be puniſhed, I will " allow your remedy for a good " one. But you have not ſaid any " thing like this; and which is " more, I tell you before-hand, " you dare not ſay it. And whilſt " you do not, the world has reaſon " muſt be puniſhed." Upon which thus you inſult: " Can any body that " hears you ſay ſo, " believe you in " earneſt," &c. Now here I acknowledge, that though want or neglect of examination be a general fault, yet the method I propoſe for curing it, does not reach to all that are guilty of it, but is limited to thoſe who reject the true religion, propoſed to them with ſufficient evidence. But then to let you ſee how little ground you have to ſay that I prevaricate in this matter, I ſhall only deſire you to conſider, what it is that the author and myſelf were inquiring after: for it is not, what courſe is to be taken to confirm and eſtabliſh thoſe in the truth, who have already embraced it: nor, how they may be enabled to propagate it to others; (for both which purpoſes I have already acknow-

" ſon to judge, that however want " of examination be a general " fault, which you with great ve- " hemency have exaggerated; yet " you uſe it only for a pretence to " puniſh diſſenters; and either " diſtruſt your remedy, that it " will not cure this evil, or elſe " care not to have it generally " cured. This evidently appears " from your whole management " of the argument. And he that " reads your treatiſe with atten- " tion, will be more confirmed " in this opinion, when he ſhall " find that you, who are ſo earneſt " to have men puniſhed, to bring " them to conſider and examine, " that ſo they may diſcover the " way of ſalvation, have not ſaid " one word of conſidering, ſearch- " ing, and hearkening to the ſcrip- " ture: which had been as good " a rule for a chriſtian to have " ſent them to, as to reaſons and " arguments proper to convince " them of you know not what; " as to the inſtruction and govern- " ment of the proper miniſters of " religion, which who they are, " men are yet far from being a- " greed; or as to the information " of thoſe, who tell them they " have miſtaken their way, and " offer to ſhow them the right; " and to the like uncertain and " dangerous guides; which were " not thoſe that our Saviour and " the apoſtles ſent men to, but to " the ſcriptures: Search the ſcrip- " tures, for in them you think you " have

acknowledged it very uſeful, and a thing much to be deſired, that all ſuch perſons ſhould, as far as they are able, ſearch into the grounds upon which their religion ſtands, and challenges their belief;) but the ſubject of our inquiry is only, what method is to be uſed, to bring men to the true religion. Now if this be the only thing we were inquiring after, (as you cannot deny it to be) then every one ſees that in ſpeaking to this point, I had nothing to do with any who have already embraced the true religion; becauſe they are not to be brought to that religion, but only to be confirmed and edified in it; but was only to conſider how thoſe who reject it, may be brought to embrace it. So that how much ſoever any of thoſe who own the true religion, may be guilty of neglect of examination; it is

" have eternal life, says our Saviour to the unbelieving persecuting jews, John v. 39. And it is the scriptures which, St. Paul says, are able to make wise unto salvation, 2 Tim. iii. 15.

" Talk no more therefore, if you have any care of your reputation, how much it is every man's interest not to be left to himself, without molestation, without punishment in matters of religion. Talk not of bringing men to embrace the truth that must save them, by putting them upon examination. Talk no more of force and punishment, as the only way left to bring men to examine. It is evident you mean nothing less: for though want of examination be the only fault you complain of, and punishment be in your opinion the only way to bring men to it; and this the whole design of your book; yet you have not once proposed in it, that those who do not impartially examine, should be forced to it. And that you may not think I talk at random, when I say you dare not; I will, if you please, give you some reasons for my saying so.

" First, Because if you propose that all should be punished, who are ignorant, who have not used such consideration as is apt and proper to manifest the truth; but have been determined in the choice of their religion by " im-

is evident, I was only concerned to show how it may be cured in those who, by reason of it, reject the true religion, duly proposed or tendered to them. And certainly to confine myself to this, is not to prevaricate, unless to keep within the bounds which the question under debate prescribes me, be to prevaricate.

In telling me therefore that " I " dare not say that " the ignorant, the " careless, the in- " considerate, the " negligent in exa- " mining, &c. (i. e. " all that are such) " are to be punish- " ed," you only tell me that I dare not be impertinent. And therefore I hope you will excuse me, if I take no notice of the three reasons you offer in your next page for your saying so. And yet if I had a mind to talk impertinently, I know not why I might not have dared

" impreſſions of education, admi-
" ration of perſons, worldly re-
" ſpects, prejudices, and the like
" incompetent motives; and have
" taken up their religion, with-
" out examining it as they ought;
" you will propoſe to have ſeve-
" ral of your own church, be it
" what it will, puniſhed; which
" would be a propoſition too apt
" to offend too many of it, for
" you to venture on. For what-
" ever need there be of reforma-
" tion, every one will not thank
" you for propoſing ſuch an one
" as muſt begin at, or at leaſt reach
" to, the houſe of God.

" Secondly, Becauſe if you
" ſhould propoſe that all thoſe
" who are ignorant, careleſs and
" negligent in examining, ſhould
" be puniſhed, you would have
" little to ſay in this queſtion of
" toleration: for if the laws of the
" ſtate were made as they ought
" to be, equal to all the ſubjects,
" without diſtinction of men of
" different profeſſions in religion;
" and the faults to be amended
" by puniſhments, were impartia-
" ally puniſhed in all who are
" guilty of them; this would im-
" mediately produce a perfect to-
" leration, or ſhow the uſeleſſneſs
" of force in matters of religion.
" If therefore you think it ſo ne-
" ceſſary, as you ſay, for the pro-
" moting of true religion, and the
" ſalvation of ſouls, that men
" ſhould be puniſhed to make
" them examine; do but find a
" way

dared to do ſo, as well as other men.

There is one thing more in this paragraph, which, though nothing more pertinent than the reſt, I ſhall not wholly paſs over. It lies in theſe words: " He that reads your " treatiſe with at- " tention, will be " more confirmed " in this opinion," (viz. That I uſe want of examination only for a pretence to puniſh diſſenters, &c.) " when he ſhall find " that you, who are " ſo earneſt to have " men puniſhed, to " bring them to " conſider and exa- " mine, that ſo they " may diſcover the " way of ſalvation, " have not ſaid one " word of conſider- " ing, ſearching and " hearkening to the " ſcripture; which " had been as good " a rule for a chriſ- " tian to have ſent " them to, as to rea- " ſons and argu- " ments proper to " convince them of " you know not " what,

" way to apply force to all that " have not thoroughly and impartially examined, and you have " my consent. For though force " be not the proper means of promoting religion; yet there is " no better way to shew the usefulness of it, than the applying " it equally to miscarriages, in " whomsoever found, and not " to distinct parties or persuasions " of men, for the reformation of " them alone, when others are " equally faulty.

" Thirdly, Because without being for as large a toleration as " the author proposes, you cannot be truly and sincerely for a " free and impartial examination. " For whoever examines, must " have the liberty to judge, and " follow his judgment; or else " you put him upon examination to no purpose. And whether that will not as well lead " men from, as to your church, " is so much a venture, that by " your way of writing, it is evident enough you are loth to hazard it; and if you are of the " national church, it is plain your " brethren will not bear with you " in the allowance of such a liberty. You must therefore either change your method; and " if the want of examination be " that great and dangerous fault " you would have corrected, you " must equally punish all that are " equally guilty of any neglect in " this matter; and then take your " only " what, &c." How this confirms that opinion, I do not see; nor have you thought fit to instruct me. But as to the thing itself, viz. " my not saying one " word of consider- " ing, searching, and " hearkening to the " scripture;" whatever advantage a captious adversary may imagine he has in it, I hope it will not seem strange to any indifferent and judicious person, who shall but consider that throughout my treatise I speak of the true religion only in general, i. e. not as limited to any particular dispensation, or to the times of the scriptures; but as reaching from the fall of Adam to the end of the world, and so comprehending the times which preceded the scriptures; wherein yet God left not himself without witness, but furnished mankind with sufficient means of knowing him and his

" only means, your beloved force, " and make the beſt of it; or elſe " you muſt put off your maſk, " and confeſs that you deſign not " your puniſhments to bring men " to examination, but to confor- " mity. For the fallacy you have " uſed, is too groſs to paſs upon " this age."

his will, in order to their eternal ſalvation. For I appeal to all men of art, whether, ſpeaking of the true religion under this generality, I could be allowed to deſcend to any ſuch rules of it, as belong only to ſome particular times, or diſpenſations; ſuch as you cannot but acknowledge the Old and New Teſtaments to be.

In this your anſwer, you ſay, " the ſubject of our " inquiry is only what method is to be uſed to bring " men to the true religion." He that reads what you ſay, again and again, " That the magiſtrate is impow- " ered and obliged to procure as much as in him lies, " i. e. as far as by penalties it can be procured, that " NO MAN neglect his ſoul," and ſhall remember how many pages you employ, A. p. 6, &c. And here p. 6, &c. to ſhow that it is the corruption of human nature which hinders men from doing what they may and ought for the ſalvation of their ſouls; and that therefore penalties, no other means being left, and force were neceſſary to be uſed by the magiſtrate to remove theſe great obſtacles of luſts and corruptions, that " none " of his ſubjects might remain ignorant of the way of " ſalvation, or refuſe to embrace it." One would think " your inquiry had been after the means of CURING " MEN'S averſion to the true religion, (which," you tell us, p. 53, " if not cured, is certainly deſtructive of " men's eternal ſalvation") that ſo they might heartily embrace it for their ſalvation. But here you tell us, " your inquiry is only what method is to be uſed to " bring men to the true religion:" whereby you evidently mean nothing but outward conformity to that which you think the true church, as appears by the next following words: " Now if this be the only thing we " were inquiring after, then every one ſees that in ſpeak-

'ing to this point I had nothing to do with any who 'have already embraced the true religion." And alſo every one ſees that ſince amongſt thoſe with whom (having already embraced the true religion) you and your penalties having nothing to do; there are thoſe who have not conſidered and examined matters of religion as they ought, whoſe luſts and corrupt natures keep them as far alienated from believing, and as averſe to a real obeying the truth that muſt ſave them, as any other men: it is manifeſt that embracing the true religion in your ſenſe is only embracing the outward profeſſion of it, which is nothing but outward conformity. And that being the fartheſt you would have your penalties purſue men, and there leave them with as much of their ignorance of the truth, and careleſsneſs of their ſouls, as they pleaſe: who can deny but that it would be impertinent in you to conſider how want of impartial examination, or averſion to the true religion, ſhould in them be cured? Becauſe they are none of thoſe ſubjects of the commonwealth, whoſe ſpiritual and eternal intereſts are by political government to be procured or advanced; none of thoſe ſubjects whoſe ſalvation the magiſtrate is to take care of.

And therefore I excuſe you, as you deſire, for not taking notice of my three reaſons; but whether the reader will do ſo or no, is more than I can undertake. I hope you too will excuſe me for having uſed ſo harſh a word as prevaricate, and impute it to my want of ſkill in the Engliſh tongue. But when I find a man pretend to a great concern for the ſalvation of men's ſouls, and make it one of the great ends of civil government, that the magiſtrate ſhould make uſe of force to bring all his ſubjects to conſider, ſtudy and examine, believe and embrace the truth that muſt ſave them; when I ſhall have to do with a man, who to this purpoſe hath writ two books to find out and defend the proper remedies for that general backwardneſs and averſion, which depraved human nature keeps men in, to an impartial ſearch after, and hearty embracing the true religion; and who talks of nothing leſs than obligations on ſovereigns, both from their particular duty, as well as from common

common charity, to take care that none of their ſubjects ſhould want the aſſiſtance of this only means left for their ſalvation; nay, who has made it ſo neceſſary to men's ſalvation, that he talks as if the wiſdom and goodneſs of God would be brought in queſtion, if thoſe who needed it ſhould be deſtitute of it; and yet, notwithſtanding all this ſhow of concern for men's ſalvation, contrives the application of this ſole remedy ſo, that a great many who lie under the diſeaſe, ſhould be out of the reach and benefit of his cure, and never have this only remedy applied to them: when this I ſay is ſo manifeſtly in his thoughts all the while, that he is forced to confeſs "that, though want or neglect of examination be a general fault, yet the method he propoſes "for curing it does not reach to all that are guilty of "it;" but frankly owns, that he was not concerned to ſhow how the neglect of examination might be cured in thoſe who conform, but only in thoſe who by reaſon of it reject the true religion duly propoſed to them: which rejecting the true religion will require a man of art to ſhow to be here any thing but nonconformity to the national religion: when, I ſay, I meet with a man another time that does this, who is ſo much a man of art, as to talk of all, and mean but ſome; talk of hearty embracing the true religion, and mean nothing but conformity to the national: pretend one thing, and mean another; if you pleaſe to tell me what name I ſhall give it, I ſhall not fail: for who knows how ſoon again I may have an occaſion for it?

If I would puniſh men for nonconformity without owning of it, I could not uſe a better pretence than to ſay it was to make them hearken to reaſons and arguments proper to convince them, or to make them ſubmit to the inſtruction and government of the proper miniſters of religion, without any thing elſe; ſuppoſing ſtill at the bottom the arguments for, and the miniſters of my religion to be theſe, that till they outwardly complied with, they were to be puniſhed. But if, inſtead of outward conformity to my religion covered under theſe indefinite terms, I ſhould tell them, they were to examine the ſcripture, which was the fixed rule for them

them and me; not examining could not give me a pretence to punish them, unless I would also punish conformists, as ignorant and unversed in scripture as they, which would not do my business.

But what need I use arguments to show, that your punishing to make men examine, is designed only against dissenters, when in your answer to this very paragraph of mine, you in plain words "acknowledge, that though "want of examination be a general fault, yet the me-"thod you propose for curing does not reach to all "that are guilty of it?" To which if you please to add what you tell us, That when dissenters conform, the magistrate cannot know, and therefore never examines whether they do it upon reason and conviction or no; though it be certain that, upon conforming, penalties, the necessary means cease, it will be obvious, that whatever be talked, conformity is all that is aimed at, and that want of examination is but the pretence to punish dissenters.

And this I told you, any one must be convinced of, who observes that you, who are so earnest to have men punished to bring them to consider and examine, that so they may discover the way of salvation, have not said one word of considering, searching, and hearkening to the scripture, which, you were told, was as good a rule for a christian to have sent men to, as to "the instruc-"tion and government of the proper ministers of re-"ligion, or to the information of those who tell them "they have mistaken their way, and offer to show them "the right." For this passing by the scripture you give us this reason, that "throughout your treatise you "speak of the true religion only in general, i. e. not "as limited to any particular dispensation, or to the "times of the scriptures, but as reaching from the fall "of Adam to the end of the world, &c. And then you "appeal to all men of art, whether speaking of the "true religion, under this generality, you could be al-"lowed to descend to any such rules of it as belong "only to some particular times or dispensations, such "as I cannot but acknowledge the Old and New Tes-"taments to be."

The author that you write againſt, making it his buſineſs, as no-body can doubt who reads but the firſt page of his letter, to ſhow that it is the duty of chriſtians to tolerate both chriſtians and others who differ from them in religion; it is pretty ſtrange, in aſſerting againſt him that the magiſtrate might and ought to uſe force to bring men to the true religion, you ſhould mean any other magiſtrate than the chriſtian magiſtrate, or any other religion than the chriſtian religion. But it ſeems you took ſo little notice of the deſign of your adverſary, which was to prove, that chriſtians were not to uſe force to bring any one to the chriſtian religion; that you would prove, that chriſtians were now to uſe force, not only to bring men to the chriſtian, but alſo to the jewiſh religion; or that of the true church before the law, or to ſome true religion ſo general that it is none of theſe. "For, ſay you, throughout your "treatiſe you ſpeak of the true religion only in gene-"ral, i. e. not as limited to any particular diſpenſa-"tion:" though one that were not a man of art would ſuſpect you to be of another mind yourſelf, when you told us, the ſhutting out of the jews from the rights of the commonwealth "is a juſt and neceſſary caution in "a chriſtian commonwealth;" which you ſay to juſtify your exception in the beginning of your "argument," againſt the largeneſs of the author's toleration, who would not have jews excluded. But ſpeak of the true religion only in general as much as you pleaſe, if your true religion be that by which men muſt be ſaved, can you ſend a man to any better guide to that true religion now than the ſcripture?

If when you were in your altitudes, writing the firſt book, your men of art could not allow you to deſcend to any ſuch rule as the ſcripture, (though even there you acknowledge the ſeverities ſpoken againſt are ſuch as are uſed to make men chriſtians;) becauſe there, (by an art proper to yourſelf,) you were to ſpeak of true religion under a generality, which had nothing to do with the duty of chriſtians, in reference to toleration. Yet when here in your ſecond book, where you condeſcend all along to ſpeak of the CHRISTIAN RELIGION, and

and tell us, "that the magiſtrates have authority to "make laws for promoting the chriſtian religion; and "do by their laws deſign to contribute what in them "lies to make men good CHRISTIANS;" and complain of toleration as the very bane of the life and ſpirit of CHRISTIANITY, &c. and have vouchſafed particularly to mention the goſpel; why here, having been called upon for it, you could not ſend men to the ſcriptures, and tell them directly, that thoſe they were to ſtudy diligently, thoſe they were impartially and carefully to examine, to bring them to the true religion, and into the way of ſalvation; rather than talk to them as you do, of receiving inſtruction, and conſidering reaſons and arguments proper and ſufficient to convince them; rather than propoſe, as you do all along, ſuch objects of examination and inquiry in general terms, as are as hard to be found, as the thing itſelf for which they are to be examined: why, I ſay, you have here again avoided ſending men to examine the ſcriptures; is juſt matter of inquiry. And for this you muſt apply yourſelf again to your men of art, to furniſh you with ſome other reaſon.

If you will but caſt your eyes back to your next page, you will there find that you build upon this, that the ſubject of your and the author's inquiry "is only what "method is to be uſed to bring men to the true reli-"gion." If this be ſo, your men of art, who cannot allow you to deſcend to any ſuch rule as the ſcriptures, becauſe you ſpeak of the true religion in general, i. e. not as limited to any particular diſpenſation, or to the times of the ſcriptures, muſt allow, that you deſerve to be head of their college; ſince you are ſo ſtrict an obſerver of their rules, that though your inquiry be, "What method is to be uſed to bring men to the true "religion," now under the particular diſpenſation of the goſpel, and under ſcripture-times; you think it an unpardonable fault to recede ſo far from your generality, as to admit the ſtudy and examination of the ſcripture into your method; for fear, it is like, your method would be too particular, if it would not now ſerve to bring men to the true religion, who lived before the

flood. But had you had as good a memory, as is generally thought needful to a man of art, it is believed you would have ſpared this reaſon, for your being ſo backward in putting men upon examination of the ſcripture. And any one, but a man of art, who ſhall read what you tell us the magiſtrate's duty is; and will but conſider how convenient it would be, that men ſhould receive no inſtruction but from the miniſtry, that you there tell us the magiſtrate aſſiſts; examine no arguments, hear nothing of the goſpel, receive no other ſenſe of the ſcripture, but what that miniſtry propoſes; (who if they had but the coactive power, you think them as capable of as other men,) might aſſiſt themſelves; he, I ſay, who reflects but on theſe things, may perhaps find a reaſon that may better ſatisfy the ignorant and unlearned, who have not had the good luck to arrive at being of the number of theſe men of art, why you cannot deſcend to propoſe to men the ſtudying of the ſcripture.

Let me for once ſuppoſe you in holy orders, (for we that are not of the adepti, may be allowed to be ignorant of the punctilios in writing obſerved by the men of art) and let me then aſk what art is this, whoſe rules are of that authority, that one, who has received commiſſion from heaven to preach the goſpel in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon for the ſalvation of ſouls, may not allow himſelf to propoſe the reading, ſtudying, examining of the ſcripture, which has for at leaſt theſe ſixteen hundred years contained the only true religion in the world; for fear ſuch a propoſal ſhould offend againſt the rules of this art, by being too particular, and confined to the goſpel-diſpenſation; and therefore could not paſs muſter, nor find admittance, in a treatiſe wherein the author profeſſes it his only buſineſs to "inquire what "method is to be uſed to bring men to the true reli-"gion?" Do you expect any other diſpenſation; that you are ſo afraid of being too particular, if you ſhould recommend the uſe and ſtudy of the ſcripture, to bring men to the true religion now in the times of the goſpel? Why might you not as well ſend them to the ſcriptures, as to the miniſters and teachers of the true religion?

religion? Have thoſe miniſters any other religion to teach, than what is contained in the ſcriptures? But perhaps you do this out of kindneſs and care, becauſe poſſibly the ſcriptures could not be found; but who were the miniſters of the true religion, men could not poſſibly miſs. Indeed you have allowed yourſelf to deſcend to what belongs only to ſome particular times and diſpenſations, for their ſake, when you ſpeak of the miniſters of the goſpel. But whether it be as fully agreed on amongſt chriſtians, who are the miniſters of the goſpel that men muſt hearken to, and be guided by; as which are the writings of the apoſtles and evangeliſts, that, if ſtudied, will inſtruct them in the way to heaven; is more than you or your men of art can be poſitive in. Where are the canons of this over-ruling art to be found, to which you pay ſuch reverence? May a man of no diſtinguiſhing character be admitted to the privilege of them? For I ſee it may be of notable uſe at a dead-lift, and bring a man off with flying colours, when truth and reaſon can do him but little ſervice. The ſtrong guard you have in the powers you write for; and when you have engaged a little too far, the ſafe retreat you have always at hand in an appeal to theſe men of art; made me almoſt at a ſtand, whether I were not beſt make a truce with one who had ſuch auxiliaries. A friend of mine finding me talk thus, replied briſkly, it is a matter of religion, which requires not men of art; and the aſſiſtance of ſuch art as favours ſo little of the ſimplicity of the goſpel, both ſhows and makes the cauſe the weaker. And ſo I went on to your two next paragraphs.

In them, to vindicate a pretty ſtrange argument for the magiſtrate's uſe of force, you think it convenient to repeat it out of your A. p. 26; and ſo, in compliance with you, ſhall I do here again. There you tell us, "The power you aſcribe to the magiſtrate is given "him to bring men, not to his own, but to the true "religion: and though, (as our author puts us in "mind) the religion of every prince is orthodox to "himſelf; yet if this power keep within its bounds, "it can ſerve the intereſt of no other religion but the

" true, among ſuch as have any concern for their eter-
" nal ſalvation; (and thoſe that have none, deſerve
" not to be conſidered) becauſe the penalties it enables
" him that has it to inflict, are not ſuch as may tempt
" ſuch perſons either to renounce a religion which they
" believe to be true, or to profeſs one which they do
" not believe to be ſo; but only ſuch as are apt to
" put them upon a ſerious and impartial examination
" of the controverſy between the magiſtrate and them,
" which is the way for them to come to the know-
" ledge of the truth. And if, upon ſuch examination
" of the matter, they chance to find that the truth
" does not lie on the magiſtrate's ſide, they have gained
" thus much however, even by the magiſtrate's miſap-
" plying his power; that they know better than they
" did before, where the truth doth lie; and all the
" hurt that comes to them by it, is only the ſuffering
" ſome tolerable inconveniencies for their following
" the light of their own reaſon, and the dictates of
" their own conſciences; which certainly is no ſuch
" miſchief to mankind as to make it more eligible that
" there ſhould be no ſuch power veſted in the magiſ-
" trate, but the care of every man's ſoul ſhould be left
" to himſelf alone, (as this author demands it.)"

To this I tell you, " That here, out of abundant
" kindneſs, when diſſenters have their heads, without
" any cauſe, broken, you provide them a plaiſter."
For, ſay you, " if upon ſuch examination of the mat-
" ter, (i. e. brought to it by the magiſtrate's puniſh-
" ment) they chance to find that the truth doth not
" lie on the magiſtrate's ſide; they have gained thus
" much however, even by the magiſtrate's miſapplying
" his power, that they know better than they did be-
" fore, where the truth does lie. Which is as true as
" if you ſhould ſay: Upon examination I find ſuch an
" one is out of the way to York, therefore I know
" better than I did before that I am in the right. For
" neither of you may be in the right. This were true
" indeed, if there were but two ways in all, a right
" and a wrong." To this you reply here: " That
" whoever ſhall conſider the penalties, will, you per-
" ſuade

" ſuade yourſelf, find no heads broken, and ſo but little " need of a plaiſter. The penalties, as you ſay, are " to be ſuch as will not tempt ſuch as have any con- " cern for their eternal ſalvation, either to renounce a " religion which they believe to be true, or profeſs one " which they believe not to be ſo; but only ſuch as, " being weighed in gold ſcales, are juſt enough, or " as you expreſs it, are apt to put them upon a ſerious " and impartial examination of the controverſy between " the magiſtrate and them." If you had been pleaſed to have told us what penalties thoſe were, we might have been able to gueſs whether there would have been broken heads or no. But ſince you have not vouch-ſafed to do it, and if I miſtake not, will again appeal to your men of art for another diſpenſation rather than ever do it; I fear no-body can be ſure theſe penalties will not reach to ſomething worſe than a broken head: eſpecially if the magiſtrate ſhall obſerve that you im-pute the riſe and growth of falſe religions (which it is the magiſtrate's duty to hinder) to the pravity of hu-man nature, unbridled by authority; which by what follows he may have reaſon to think is to uſe force ſuf-ficient to counterbalance the folly, perverſeneſs, and wickedneſs of men: and whether then he may not lay on penalties ſufficient, if not to break men's heads, yet to ruin them in their eſtates and liberties, will be more than you can undertake. And ſince you acknowledge here, that the magiſtrate may err ſo far in the uſe of this his power, as to miſtake the perſons that he lays his penalties on; will you be ſecurity that he ſhall not alſo miſtake in the proportion of them, and not lay on ſuch as men would willingly exchange for a broken head? All the aſſurance you give us of this is, " If this " power keep within its bounds, i. e. as you here ex- " plain it, If the penalties the magiſtrate makes uſe of " to promote a falſe religion, do not exceed the mea- " ſure of thoſe which he may warrantably uſe for the " promoting the true." The magiſtrate may, notwith-ſtanding any thing you have ſaid, or can ſay, uſe any ſort of penalties, any degree of puniſhment; you having neither ſhowed the meaſure of them, nor will be ever

able to ſhow the utmoſt meaſure which may not be exceeded, if any may be uſed.

But what is this I find here? "If the penalties the "magiſtrate make uſe of to promote a FALSE RELI-"GION." Is it poſſible that the magiſtrate can make uſe of penalties to promote a falſe religion; of whom you told us but three pages back, "That may always "be ſaid of him, (what St. Paul ſaid of himſelf) That "he can do nothing againſt the truth, but for the "truth?" By that one would have thought you had undertaken to us, that the magiſtrate could no more uſe force to promote a falſe religion, than St. Paul could preach to promote a falſe religion. If you ſay, the magiſtrate has no commiſſion to promote a falſe religion, and therefore it may always be ſaid of him what St. Paul ſaid of himſelf, &c. I ſay, no miniſter was ever commiſſioned to preach falſhood; and therefore "it may always be ſaid of every miniſter, (what St. "Paul ſaid of himſelf) that he can do nothing againſt "the truth, but for the truth:" whereby we ſhall very commodiouſly have an infallible guide in every pariſh, as well as one in every commonwealth. But if you thus uſe ſcripture, I imagine you will have reaſon to appeal again to your men of art, whether, though you may not be allowed to recommend to others the examination and uſe of ſcripture, to find the true religion, yet you yourſelf may not uſe the ſcripture to what purpoſe, and in what ſenſe you pleaſe, for the defence of your cauſe.

To the remainder of what I ſaid in that paragraph, your anſwer is nothing but an exception to an inference I made. The argument you were upon, was to juſtify the magiſtrate's inflicting penalties to bring men to a falſe religion, by the gain thoſe that ſuffered them would receive.

Their gain was this: "That they would know better "than they did before, where the truth does lie." To which I replied, "Which is as true, as if you ſhould "ſay, upon examination I find ſuch an one is out of "the way to York; therefore I know better than I did "before, that I am in the right." This conſequence you

you find fault with, and say it should be thus: "Therefore I know better than I did before, where the right "way lies." This, you tell me, "would have been "true; which was not for my purpose." These consequences, one or the other, are much-what alike true. For he that of an hundred ways, amongst which there is but one right, shuts out one that he discovers certainly to be wrong, knows as much better than he did before, that he is in the right, as he knows better than before, where the right way lies. For before it was ninety-nine to one that he was not in the right; and now he knows it is but ninety-eight to one that he is not in the right; and therefore knows so much better than before, that he is in the right, just as much as he knows better than he did before, where the right way lies. For let him upon your supposition proceed on; and every day, upon examination of a controversy with some one in one of the remaining ways, discover him to be in the wrong; he will every day know better than he did before, equally, where the right way lies, and that he is in it; till at last he will come to discover the right way itself, and himself in it. And therefore your inference, whatever you think, is as much as the other for my purpose; which was to show what a notable gain a man made in the variety of false opinions and religions in the world, by discovering that the magistrate had not the truth on his side; and what thanks he owed the magistrate, for inflicting penalties upon him so much for his improvement, and for affording him so much knowledge at so cheap a rate. And should not a man have reason to boast of his purchase, if he should by penalties be driven to hear and examine all the arguments that can be proposed by those in power for all their foolish and false religions? And yet this gain is what you propose, as a justification of magistrates inflicting penalties for promoting their false religions. And an "impartial examination of the contro-"versy between them and the magistrate, you tell us "here, is the way for such as have any concern for "their eternal salvation to come to the knowledge of "the truth."

To

To my saying, "He that is punished may have examined before, and then I am sure he gains nothing:" You reply, "But neither does he lose much, if it be "true, which you there add, that all the hurt that befalls him, is only the suffering some tolerable inconvenience for his following the light of his own reason, and the dictates of his conscience." So it is therefore you would have a man rewarded for being an honest man; (for so is he who follows the light of his own reason, and the dictates of his conscience;) only with the suffering some tolerable inconveniencies. And yet those tolerable inconveniencies are such as are to counterbalance men's lusts, and the corruption of depraved nature; which you know any slight penalty is sufficient to master. But that the magistrate's discipline shall stop at those your tolerable inconveniencies, is what you are loth to be guarantee for: for all the security you dare give of it, is, "If it be true which "you there add." But if it should be otherwise, the hurt may be more I see than you are willing to answer

L. II. p. 133. "However, you think you "do well to encourage "the magistrate in punishing, and comfort "the man who has suffered unjustly, by "showing what he shall "gain by it. Whereas, "on the contrary, in "a discourse of this "nature, where the "bounds of right and "wrong are inquired "into, and should be "established, the magistrate was to be "showed the bounds "of his authority, and "warned

L. III. p. 71. As to what you say here of the nature of my discourse, I shall only put you in mind that the question there debated is: Whether the magistrate has any right or authority to use force for the promoting the true religion. Which plainly supposes the unlawfulness and injustice of using force to promote a false religion, as granted on both sides. So that I could no way be obliged to take notice of it in my discourse, but only as occasion should be offered.

And whether I have not showed the bounds of the magistrate's authority, as far as I was

" warned of the injury " he did when he mis- " applied his power, " and punished any man " who deserved it not; " and not be soothed into " injustice, by conside- " ration of gain that " might thence accrue " to the sufferer. Shall " we do evil, that good " may come of it? " There are a sort of " people who are very " wary of touching up- " on the magistrate's " duty, and tender of " showing the bounds " of his power, and the " injustice and ill con- " sequences of his mis- " applying it; at least, " so long as it is mis- " applied in favour of " them, and their party. " I know not whether " you are of their num- " ber; but this I am " sure, you have the " misfortune here to fall " into their mistake. " The magistrate, you " confess, may in this " case misapply his pow- " er: and instead of re- " presenting to him the " injustice of it, and " the account he must " give to his sovereign " one day of this great " trust put into his " hands, was any way obliged to do it, let any indifferent person judge. But to talk here of a " sort of " people who are very wary of " touching upon the magis- " trate's duty, and tender of " showing the bounds of his " power," where I tell the magistrate that the power I ascribe to him, in reference to religion, is given him to bring men, " not to his own, but to " the true religion;" and that he misapplies it, when he endeavours to promote a false religion by it; is, methinks, at least a little unseasonable.

Nor am I any more concerned in what you say of the magistrate's misapplying his power in favour of a party. For as you have not yet proved that his applying his power to the promoting the true religion, (which is all that I contend for) is misapplying it; so much less can you prove it to be misapplying it in favour of a party.

But that " I encourage the " magistrate in punishing men " to bring them to a false re- " ligion, (for that is the pu- " nishing we here speak of) " and sooth him into injustice, " by showing what those who " suffer unjustly shall gain by " it," when in the very same breath I tell him that by so punishing he misapplies his power; is a discovery which I believe

" hands, for the equal " protection of all his " ſubjects; you pretend " advantages which the " ſufferer may receive " from it: and ſo in- " ſtead of diſheartening " from, you give en- " couragement to the " miſchief. Which, up- " on your principle, " joined to the natural " thirſt in man after ar- " bitrary power, may " be carried to all man- " ner of exorbitancy, " with ſome pretence " of right."

believe none but yourſelf could have made. When I ſay that the magiſtrate miſapplies his power by ſo puniſhing; I ſuppoſe all other men underſtand me to ſay, that he ſins in doing it, and lays himſelf open to divine vengeance by it. And can he be encouraged to this, by hearing what others may gain by what (without repentance) muſt coſt him ſo dear?

Here your men of art will do well to be at hand again. For it may be ſeaſonable for you to appeal to them, whether the nature of your diſcourſe will allow you to deſcend to ſhow " the magiſtrate the bounds of his au- " thority, and warn him of the injury he does, if he " miſapplies his power."

You ſay, " the queſtion there debated, is, whether " the magiſtrate has any right or authority to uſe force " for promoting the true religion; which plainly ſup- " poſes the unlawfulneſs and injuſtice of uſing force " to promote a falſe religion, as granted on both ſides." Neither is that the queſtion in debate; nor if it were, does it ſuppoſe what you pretend. But the queſtion in debate is, as you put it, Whether any body has a right to uſe force in matters of religion? You ſay indeed, " The magiſtrate has, to bring men to the true " religion." If thereupon you think the magiſtrate has none to bring men to a falſe religion, whatever your men of art may think, it is probable other men would not have thought it to have been beſide the nature of your diſcourſe, to have warned the magiſtrate, that he ſhould conſider well, and impartially examine

the grounds of his religion before he uſe any force to bring men to it. This is of ſuch moment to men's temporal and eternal intereſts, that it might well deſerve ſome particular caution addreſſed to the magiſtrate; who might as much need to be put in mind of impartial examination as other people. And it might, whatever your men of art may allow, be juſtly expected from you; who think it no deviation from the rules of art, to tell the ſubjects that they muſt ſubmit to the penalties laid on them, or elſe fall under the ſword of the magiſtrate: which how true ſoever, will hardly by any body be found to be much more to your purpoſe in this diſcourſe, than it would have been to have told the magiſtrate of what ill conſequence it would be to him and his people, if he miſuſed his power, and warned him to be cautious in the uſe of it. But not a word that way. Nay even where you mention the account he ſhall give for ſo doing, it is ſtill to ſatisfy the ſubjects that they are well provided for, and not left unfurniſhed of the means of ſalvation, by the right God has put into the magiſtrate's hands to uſe his power to bring them to the true religion; and therefore they ought to be well content; becauſe if the magiſtrate miſapply it, the Great Judge will puniſh him for it. Look, ſir, and ſee whether what you ſay, any where, of the magiſtrate's miſuſe of his power, have any other tendency: and then I appeal to the ſober reader, whether if you had been as much concerned for the bounding, as for the exerciſe, of force in the magiſtrate's hands, you would not have ſpoke of it after another manner.

The next thing you ſay, is, "that the queſtion (be-"ing, whether the magiſtrate has any right to uſe force "to bring men to the true religion,) ſuppoſes the un-"lawfulneſs of uſing force to promote a falſe religion "as granted on both ſides;" which is ſo far from true, that I ſuppoſe quite the contrary, viz. That if the magiſtrate has a right to uſe force to promote the true, he muſt have a right to uſe force to promote his own religion; and that for reaſons I have given you elſewhere. But the ſuppoſition of a ſuppoſition ſerves to excuſe

you

you from ſpeaking any thing directly of ſetting bounds to the magiſtrate's power, or telling him his duty in that point; though you are very frequent in mentioning the obligation he is under, that men ſhould not want the aſſiſtance of his force; and how anſwerable he is if any body miſcarry for want of it; though there be not the leaſt whiſper of any care to be taken, that no-body be miſled by it. And now I recollect myſelf, I think your method would not allow it: for if you ſhould have put the magiſtrate upon examining, it would have ſuppoſed him as liable to errour as other men; whereas, to ſecure the magiſtrate's acting right, upon your foundation of never uſing force but for the true religion, I ſee no help for it, but either he or you (who are to licenſe him) muſt be got paſt the ſtate of examination into that of certain knowledge and infallibility.

Indeed, as you ſay, "you tell the magiſtrate that the "power you aſcribe to him in reference to religion, is "given him to bring men not to his own, but to the true "religion." But do you put him upon a ſevere and impartial examination which, amongſt the many falſe, is the only true religion he muſt uſe force to bring his ſubjects to; that he may not miſtake and miſapply his power in a buſineſs of that conſequence? Not a ſyllable of this. Do you then tell him which it is he muſt take, without examination, and promote with force; whether that of England, France, or Denmark? This, methinks, is as much as the pope, with all his infallibility, could require of princes. And yet what is it leſs than this you do, when you ſuppoſe the religion of the church of England to be the only true; and upon this your ſuppoſition, tell the magiſtrate it is his duty, by force, to bring men to it, without ever putting him upon examining, or ſuffering him or any body elſe to queſtion, whether it be the only true religion or no? For if you will ſtick to what you in another place ſay: "That it is enough to ſuppoſe that "there is one true religion, and but one, and that that "religion may be known by thoſe who profeſs it;" what authority will this knowableneſs of the true religion,

gion, give to the king of England more than to the king of France, to uſe force, if he does not actually know the religion he profeſſes to be the true; or to the magiſtrate more than the ſubject, if he has not examined the grounds of his religion? But if he believes you when you tell him your religion is the true, all is well; he has authority enough to uſe force, and he need not examine any farther. If this were not the caſe; why you ſhould not be careful to prepare a little advice to make the magiſtrate examine, as well as you are ſolicitous to provide force to make the ſubject examine, will require the ſkill of a man of art to diſcover.

Whether you are not of the number of thoſe men I there mentioned, (for that there have been ſuch men in the world, inſtances might be given) one may doubt from your principles. For if, upon a ſuppoſition that yours is the true religion, you can give authority to the magiſtrate to inflict penalties on all his ſubjects that diſſent from the communion of the national church, without examining whether theirs too may not be that only true religion which is neceſſary to ſalvation; is not this to demand, that the magiſtrate's power ſhould be applied only in favour of a party? And can any one avoid being confirmed in this ſuſpicion, when he reads that broad inſinuation of yours, p. 34, as if our magiſtrates were not concerned for truth or piety, becauſe they granted a relaxation of thoſe penalties, which you would have employed in favour of your party: for ſo it muſt be called, and not the church of God, excluſive of others; unleſs you will ſay men cannot be ſaved out of the communion of your particular church, let it be national where you pleaſe.

You do not, you ſay, encourage the migiſtrate to miſapply his power; becauſe "in the very ſame breath "you tell him he miſapplies his power." I anſwer, let all men underſtand you, as much as you pleaſe, to ſay that he ſins in doing it; that will not excuſe you from encouraging him there; unleſs it be impoſſible that a man may be encouraged to ſin. If your telling the magiſtrate that his ſubjects gain by his miſapplying of force, be not an encouragement to him to miſapply it, the

the doing good to others must cease to be an encouragement to any action. And whether it be not a great encouragement in this case to the magistrate, to go on in the use of force, without impartially examining whether his or his subjects be the true religion; when he is told that, be his religion true or false, his subjects, who suffer, will be sure to be gainers by it; let any one judge. For the encouragement is not, as you put it, to the magistrate to use force to bring men to what he thinks a false religion; but it is an encouragement to the magistrate, who presumes his to be the true religion, to punish his dissenting subjects, without due and impartial examination on which side the truth lies. For having never told the magistrate, that neglect of examination is a sin in him; if you should tell him a thousand times, that he who uses his power to bring men to a false religion misapplies it; he would not understand by it that he sinned, whilst he thought his the true; and so it would be no restraint to the misapplying his power.

And thus we have some prospect of this admirable machine you have set up for the salvation of souls.

The magistrate is to use force to bring men to the true religion. But what if he misapplies it to bring men to a false religion? It is well still for his subjects: they are gainers by it. But this may encourage him to a misapplication of it. No; you tell him that he that uses it to bring men to a false religion, misapplies it; and therefore he cannot but understand that you say "he sins, and lays himself open to divine vengeance." No; he believes himself in the right; and thinks as St. Paul, whilst a persecutor, that he does God good service. And you assure him here, he makes his suffering subjects gainers; and so he goes on as comfortably as St. Paul did. Is there no remedy for this? Yes, a very ready one, and that is, that the "one only true "religion may be known by those who profess it to be "the only true religion."

To which, if we add how you moderate as well as direct the magistrate's hand in punishing; by making the last regulation of your convenient penalties to lie in

in the prudence and experience of magiſtrates themſelves; we ſhall find the advantages of your method. For are not your neceſſary means of ſalvation, which lie in moderate penalties uſed to bring men to the true religion, brought to an happy ſtate; when that which is to guide the magiſtrate in the knowledge of the true religion, is, that "the true religion may be known by "thoſe who profeſs it to be the only true religion;" and the convenient penalties to be uſed for the promoting of it, are ſuch as the magiſtrate ſhall in his prudence think fit; and that whether the magiſtrate applies it right or wrong, the ſubject will be a gainer by it? If in either of your diſcourſes, you have given the magiſtrate any better direction than this to know the true religion by, which he is by force to promote; or any other intelligible meaſure to moderate his penalties by; or any other caution to reſtrain the miſuſe of his power; I deſire you to ſhow it me: and then I ſhall think I have reaſon to believe, that in this debate you have had more care of the true religion, and the ſalvation of ſouls, than to encourage the magiſtrate to uſe the power he has, by your direction, and without examination; and to what degree he ſhall think fit, in favour of a party. For the matter thus ſtated, if I miſtake not, will ſerve any magiſtrate to uſe any degree of force againſt any that diſſent from his national religion.

Having recommended to the ſubjects the magiſtrate's perſecution by a ſhow of gain, which will accrue to them by it; you do well to bring in the example of Julian; who, whatever he did to the chriſtians, would, no more than you, own that it was perſecution; but for their advantage in the other world. But whether his pretending gain to them, upon grounds which he did not believe; or your pretending gain to them, which no-body can believe to be one; be a greater mockery, you were beſt look. This ſeems reaſonable, that his talk of philanthropy, and yours of moderation, ſhould be bound up together. For till you ſpeak and tell them plainly what they may truſt to, the advantage the perſecuted are to receive from your clemency, may, I

imagine, make a second part to what the christians of that age received from his. But you are solicitous for the salvation of souls, and dissenters shall find the benefit of it.

CHAPTER IX.

Of the usefulness of force in matters of religion.

YOU having granted that in all pleas for any thing, because of its usefulness, it is not enough to say that it may be serviceable; but it must be considered, not only what it may, but what it is likely to produce; and the greater good or harm likely to come from it ought to determine the use of it; I think there need nothing more to be said to show the uselessness of force in the magistrate's hands for promoting the true religion, after it has been proved that, if any, then all magistrates, who believe their religion to be true, are under an obligation to use it. But since the usefulness and necessity of force is the main foundation on which you build your hypothesis, we will in the two remaining chapters examine particularly what you say for them.

To the author's saying, "That truth seldom hath "received, and he fears never will receive much assist-"ance from the power of great men, to whom she is "but rarely known, and more rarely welcome;" You answer, "And yet God himself foretold and promised "that kings should be nursing fathers, and queens "nursing mothers to his church." If we may judge of this prophecy by what is past or present, we shall have reason to think it concerns not our days; or if it does, that God intended not that the church should have many such nursing fathers and nursing mothers, that were to nurse them up with moderate penalties, if those were

to

to be the ſwaddling-clouts of this nurſery. Perhaps, if you read that chapter, you will think you have little reaſon to build much on this promiſe, till the reſtoring of Iſrael: and when you ſee the gentiles bring thy, (i. e. as the ſtyle of the chapter ſeems to import the ſons of the Iſraelites) "ſons in their arms, and thy "daughters be carried upon their ſhoulders," as is promiſed in the immediately preceding words; you may conclude that then "kings ſhall be thy (i. e. "Iſrael's) nurſing fathers, and queens thy nurſing "mothers." This ſeems to me to be the time deſigned by that prophecy; and I gueſs to a great many others, upon an attentive reading that chapter in Iſaiah. And to all ſuch this text will do you little ſervice, till you make out the meaning of it better than by barely quoting of it; which will ſcarce ever prove, that God hath promiſed that ſo many princes ſhall be friends to the true religion, that it will be better for the true religion, that princes ſhould uſe force for the impoſing or propagating of their religions, than not. For unleſs it prove that, it anſwers not the author's argument; as an indifferent reader muſt needs ſee. For he ſays not "truth never, but ſhe ſeldom hath received, and he "fears never will receive (not any, but) much aſſiſtance "from the power of great men, to whom ſhe is BUT "RARELY KNOWN, AND MORE RARELY WELCOME." And therefore to this of Iſaiah pray join that of St. Paul, 1 Cor. i. 26. "Not many wiſe, not many mighty, "not many noble."

But ſuppoſing many kings were to be nurſing fathers to the church, and that this prophecy were to be fulfilled in this age, and the church were now to be their nurſery; it is I think more proper to underſtand this figurative promiſe, that their pains and diſcipline were to be employed on thoſe in the church, and that they ſhould feed and cheriſh them, rather than that theſe words meant that they ſhould whip thoſe that were out of it. And therefore this text will, I ſuppoſe, upon a juſt conſideration of it, ſignify very little againſt the known matter of fact which the author urges; unleſs you can find a country where the cudgel and the ſcourge

are more the badges and inſtruments of a good nurſe, than the breaſt and the bib; and that ſhe is counted a good nurſe of her own child, who buſies herſelf in whipping children not her's, nor belonging to her nurſery.

" The fruits which give you no encouragement to " hope for any advantage from the author's toleration, " which almoſt all but the church of England enjoyed " in the times of the bleſſed reformation, as it was " called, you tell us, were ſects and hereſies." Here your zeal hangs a little in your light. It is not the author's toleration which here you accuſe. That, you know, is univerſal: and the univerſality of it is that which a little before you wondered at, and complained of. Had it been the author's toleration, it could not have been almoſt all but the church of England; but it had been the church of England and all others. But let us take it, that ſects and hereſies were, or will be the fruits of a free toleration; i. e. men are divided in their opinions and ways of worſhip. Differences in ways of worſhip, wherein there is nothing mixed inconſiſtent with the true religion, will not hinder men from ſalvation, who ſincerely follow the beſt light they have; which they are as likely to do under toleration as force. And as for difference of opinions, ſpeculative opinions in religion; I think I may ſafely ſay, that there are ſcarce any-where three conſidering men, (for it is want of conſideration you would puniſh) who are in their opinions throughout of the ſame mind. Thus far then, if charity be preſerved, (which it is likelier to be where there is toleration, than where there is perſecution) though without uniformity, I ſee no great reaſon to complain of thoſe ill fruits of toleration.

But men will run, as they did in the late times, into " dangerous and deſtructive errours, and extravagant ways of worſhip." As to errours in opinion; if men upon toleration be ſo apt to vary in opinions, and run ſo wide one from another; it is evident they are not ſo averſe to thinking as you complain. For it is hard for men, not under force, to quit one opinion and embrace another, without thinking of them. But if there be danger of that, it is moſt likely the national reli-

religion ſhould ſweep and draw to itſelf the looſe and unthinking part of men, who without thought, as well as without any conteſt with their corrupt nature, may embrace the profeſſion of the countenanced religion, and join in outward communion with the great and ruling men of the nation. For he that troubles not his head at all about religion, what other can ſo well ſuit him as the national, with which the cry and preferments go; and where, it being, as you ſay, preſumable that he makes that his profeſſion upon conviction, and that he is in earneſt; he is ſure to be orthodox without the pains of examining, and has the law and government on his ſide to make it good that he is in the right?

But ſeducers, if they be tolerated, will be ready at hand, and diligent; and men will hearken to them. Seducers have ſurely no force on their ſide, to make people hearken. And if this be ſo, there is a remedy at hand, better than force; if you and your friends will uſe it, which cannot but prevail; and that is, let the miniſters of truth be as diligent; and they bringing truth with them, truth obvious and eaſy to be underſtood, as you ſay what is neceſſary to ſalvation is, cannot but prevail.

But ſeducers are hearkened to, becauſe they teach opinions favourable to men's luſts. Let the magiſtrate, as is his duty, hinder the practices which their luſts would carry them to, and the advantage will be ſtill on the ſide of truth.

After all, ſir, if, as the apoſtle tells the corinthians, 1 Cor. xi. 19. "There muſt be hereſies amongſt you, "that they which are approved may be made manifeſt;" which, I beſeech you, is beſt for the ſalvation of men's ſouls; that they ſhould inquire, hear, examine, conſider, and then have the liberty to profeſs what they are perſuaded of; or that, having conſidered, they ſhould be forced not to own nor follow their perſuaſions; or elſe that, being of the national religion, they ſhould go ignorantly on without any conſideration at all? In one caſe, if your penalties prevail, men are forced to act contrary to their conſciences, which is not the way to

ſalvation; and if the penalties prevail not, you have the ſame fruits, ſects and hereſies, as under toleration: in the other, it is true, thoſe ignorant, looſe, unthinking conformiſts do not break company with thoſe who embrace the truth that will ſave them; but I fear can no more be ſaid to have any ſhare in it, than thoſe who openly diſſent from it. For it is not being in the company, but having on the wedding-garment, that keeps men from being bound hand and foot, and caſt into the dreadful and eternal priſon.

You tell us, "Force has a proper efficacy to procure "the enlightening of the underſtanding, and the pro- "duction of belief," viz. by making men conſider. But your aſcribing men's averſion to examine matters of religion to the corruption of their nature; force, your way applied, (i. e. ſo that men avoid the penalties by an outward conformity) cannot have any proper efficacy to procure conſideration; ſince men may outwardly conform, and retain their corruption and averſion to conſideration; and upon this account force your way applied, is abſolutely impertinent.

But further; if force has ſuch a proper efficacy to procure the production of belief, it will do more harm than good, employed by any but orthodox magiſtrates. But how to put it only into orthodox hands is the difficulty. For I think I have proved, that if orthodox magiſtrates may, and ought to uſe force, for the promoting their religion; all that think themſelves orthodox are obliged to uſe it too. And this may ſerve for an anſwer to all that you have ſaid, p. 16.

I having ſaid, "Whatever indirect efficacy there be "in force applied by the magiſtrate your way, it "makes againſt you; force uſed by the magiſtrate to "bring men to conſider thoſe reaſons and arguments "which are proper and ſufficient to convince them, "but which, without being forced, they would not "conſider; may, ſay you, be ſerviceable indirectly and "at a diſtance to make men embrace the truth which "muſt ſave them. And thus, ſay I, it may be ſer- "viceable to bring men to receive and embrace "falſhood, which will deſtroy them." To this you with

with great triumph, reply,—" How, ſir, may force be " uſed by the magiſtrate, to bring men to conſider " thoſe reaſons and arguments which are proper and " ſufficient to convince them, be ſerviceable to bring " men to embrace falſhood, ſuch falſhood as will deſtroy " them? It ſeems then there are reaſons and arguments " which are proper and ſufficient to convince men of " the truth of falſhood, which will deſtroy. Which " is certainly a very extraordinary diſcovery, though ſuch " as no man can have any reaſon to thank you for."

In the firſt place, let me aſk you, Where did you find, or from what words of mine do you infer that notable propoſition, " That there are reaſons and " arguments proper and ſufficient to convince men of " the truth of falſhood?" If a magiſtrate of the true religion may uſe force to make men conſider reaſons and arguments proper to convince men of the truth of his religion, may not a prince of a falſe religion uſe force to make men conſider reaſons and arguments proper and ſufficient to convince them of what he believes to be true? And may not force thus be ſerviceable to bring men to receive and embrace falſhood?

In the next place, did you, who argue with ſo much ſchool-ſubtilty, as if you drank it in at the very fountain; never hear of ſuch an ill way of arguing as " a " conjunctis ad diviſa?" There are no arguments proper and ſufficient to bring a man into the belief of what is in itſelf falſe, whilſt he knows or believes it to be falſe; therefore there are no arguments proper and ſufficient to bring a man into the belief of what is in itſelf falſe, which he neither knows nor believes to be ſo. A ſenior ſophiſter would be laughed at for ſuch logic. And yet this is all you ſay in that ſentence you erect for a trophy, " to convince men of " the truth of falſhood;" which though not my words, but ſuch as you in your way ſupply from what I ſaid, you are exceedingly pleaſed with, and think their very repeating a triumph. But though there are no arguments proper and ſufficient to convince men of the truth of falſhood, as falſhood; yet I hope you will allow that there are arguments proper and ſufficient to make men receive falſhoods for truths; why elſe do you

complain of seducers? And those who embrace falshoods for truths, do it under the appearance of truth, misled by those arguments which make it appear so, and so convince them. And that magistrates, who take their religion to be true, though it be not so, may with force use such arguments, you will, I think, grant.

But you talk as if no-body could have arguments proper and sufficient to convince another, but he that was of your way, or your church. This indeed is a new and very extraordinary discovery, and such as your brethren, if you can convince them of it, will have reason to thank you for. For if any one was ever by arguments and reasons brought off, or seduced from your church, to be a dissenter; there were then, I think, reasons and arguments proper and sufficient to convince him. I will not name to you again Mr. Reynolds, because you have charity enough to question his sincerity. Though his leaving his country, friends, and acquaintance, may be presumed as great a mark of his being convinced and in earnest, as it is for one to write for a national religion in a country where it is uppermost. I will not yet deny, but that, in you, it may be pure zeal for the true religion, which you would have assisted with the magistrate's force. And since you seem so much concerned for your sincerity in the argument, it must be granted you deserve the character of a well-meaning man, who own your sincerity in a way so little advantageous to your judgment.

But if Mr. Reynolds, in your opinion, was misled by corrupt ends, or secular interest; what do you think of a prince [James II.] now living? Will you doubt his sincerity? or that he was convinced of the truth of the religion he professed, who ventured three crowns for it? What do you think of Mr. Chillingworth, when he left the church of England for the romish profession? Did he do it without being convinced that that was right? Or was he convinced with reasons and arguments, not proper or sufficient to convince him?

But

But certainly this could not be true, becauſe, as you ſay, p. 25, the ſcripture does not teach any thing of it. Or perhaps thoſe that leave your communion do it always without being convinced, and only think they are convinced when they are not: or are convinced with arguments not proper and ſufficient to convince them. If no-body can convince another, but he that has truth on his ſide, you do more honour to the "firſt and ſecond letter concerning toleration," than is for the advantage of your cauſe, when you impute to them the increaſe of ſects and hereſies amongſt us. And there are ſome, even of the church of England, have profeſſed themſelves ſo fully ſatisfied by the reaſons and arguments in the firſt of them, that though I dare not be poſitive to you, whoſe privilege it is to convince men that they are convinced; yet I may ſay, it is as preſumable they are convinced, having owned it; as it is preſumable that all that are conformiſts are made ſo upon reaſon and conviction.

This, I ſuppoſe, may ſerve for an anſwer to your next words, "That God in his juſt judgment will ſend ſuch "as receive not the love of truth, that they may be "ſaved, but reject it for the pleaſure they have in unrighteouſneſs, ἐνέργειαν πλάνης, ſtrong deluſion, i. e. "ſuch reaſons and arguments as will prevail with men, "ſo diſpoſed, to believe a lye, that they may be damned; this you confeſs the ſcripture plainly teaches us. "But that there are any ſuch reaſons or arguments as "are proper and ſufficient to convince or ſatisfy any, "but ſuch reſolute and obdurate ſinners, of the truth "of ſuch falſhood as will deſtroy them, is a poſition "which you are ſure the ſcripture doth not teach us; "and which, you tell me, when I have better conſidered it, you hope I will not undertake to maintain. "And yet if it be not maintainable, what I ſay here "is to no purpoſe: for if there be no ſuch reaſons and "arguments as here we ſpeak of, it is in vain to talk "of the magiſtrate's uſing force to make men conſider "them."

But if you are ſtill of the mind, that no magiſtrate but thoſe who are of the true religion, can have arguments

ments backed with force, proper and ſufficient to convince; and that in England none but reſolute obdurate ſinners ever forſook or forebore the communion of the church of England, upon reaſons and arguments that ſatisfy or convince them; I ſhall leave you to enjoy ſo charitable an opinion.

But as to the uſefulneſs of force, your way applied, I ſhall lay you down again the ſame argument I uſed before; though in words leſs fitted for your way of reaſoning on them, now I know your talent. If there be any efficacy in force to bring men to any perſuaſion, it will, your way applied, bring more men to errour than to truth. Your way of uſing it is only to puniſh men for not being of the national religion; which is the only way you do or can apply force, without a toleration. Nonconformity is the fault that is puniſhed; which fault, when it ceaſes, the puniſhment ceaſes. But yet to make them conſider, is the end for which they are puniſhed; but whether it be or be not intended to make men conſider, it alters nothing in the caſe. Now I ſay, that ſince all magiſtrates who believe their religion to be true, are as much obliged to uſe force to bring their ſubjects to it, as if it were true; and ſince moſt of the national religions of the world are erroneous; if force made uſe of to bring men to the national religion, by puniſhing diſſenters, have any efficacy, let it be what it will; indirect and at a diſtance, if you pleaſe; it is like to do twenty times more harm than good; becauſe of the national religions of the world, to ſpeak much within compaſs, there are above twenty wrong for one that is right.

Indeed, could force be directed to drive all men indifferently, who are negligent and backward in it, to ſtudy, examine, and conſider ſeriouſly matters of religion, and ſearch out the truth; and if men were, upon their ſtudy and examination, permitted to follow what appears to them to be right; you might have ſome pretence for force, as ſerviceable to truth in making men conſider. But this is impoſſible, but under a toleration. And I doubt whether, even there, force can be ſo applied, as to make men conſider and impartially

examine what is true in the profeſſed religions of the world, and to embrace it. This at leaſt is certain, that where puniſhments purſue men, like outlying deer, only to the pale of the national church; and, when once they are within that, leave them free there and at eaſe; it can do no ſervice to the true religion, even in a country where the national is the true. For the penalties ceaſing as ſoon as men are got within the pale and communion of the church, they help not men at all againſt that which you aſſign as the great hindrance to the true religion, and which therefore, in your opinion, makes force neceſſary to aſſiſt it.

For there being no neceſſity that men ſhould leave either their vices or corruption, or ſo much as their ignorance, to get within the pale of the church; force, your way applied, ſerves only to bring them, even in the few chriſtian and orthodox countries, to the profeſſion, not to the knowledge, belief, or practice, of the true religion.

You ſay corrupt nature inclines men from the true religion to falſe ones; and moderate force is requiſite to make ſuch men conſider. But ſuch men as, out of corrupt nature, and for their eaſe and carnal pleaſures, chooſe an erroneous religion without conſidering, will again, as ſoon as they can find their choice incommoded by thoſe penalties, conſult the ſame corrupt nature and carnal appetites, and, without conſidering any thing further, conform to that religion where they can beſt enjoy themſelves. It is only the conſcientious part of diſſenters, ſuch as diſſent not out of indulgence to corrupt nature, but out of perſuaſion, who will not conform without conſidering as they ought. And therefore your argument from corrupt nature, is out of doors. If moderate penalties ſerve only to work on thoſe who are led by corrupt nature, they are of no uſe but to fill the church with hypocrites; that is, to make thoſe men worſe hypocrites than they were before, by a new act of hypocriſy; and to corrupt the manners of the reſt of the church, by their converſe with theſe. And whether this be for the ſalvation of ſouls, as is pretended, or for ſome other end, that the prieſts of all religions

religions have generally ſo earneſtly contended for it, I leave to be conſidered. For as for thoſe who diſſent out of perſuaſion, I ſuſpect your moderate penalties will have little effect upon them. For ſuch men being awed by the fear of hell-fire, if that fear will not make them conſider better than they have done, moderate penalties will be too weak to work upon them. It is well if dragooning and martyring can do it.

But you add, " May it not be true nevertheleſs, that " force your way applied may be ſerviceable, indirectly " and at a diſtance, to bring men to embrace the truth " which may ſave them? which is all you are con- " cerned here to make good." So that if it may poſſibly happen that it ſhould ever bring two men to embrace the truth, you have gained your point, and over-thrown toleration, by the uſefulneſs and neceſſity there is of force. For without being forced theſe two men would never have conſidered: which is more yet than you know, unleſs you are of his private council, who only can tell when the ſeaſon of grace is paſt, and the time come that preaching, intreaty, inſtruction and perſuaſion ſhall never after prevail upon a man. But whatever you are here concerned to make good, are you not alſo concerned to remember what you ſay; where declaring againſt the magiſtrate's having a power to uſe what may any way, at any time, upon any perſon, by any accident, be uſeful towards the promoting the true religion, you ſay, " Who ſees not that how- " ever ſuch means might chance to hit right in ſome " few caſes, yet, upon the whole matter, they would " certainly do a great deal more harm than good; and " in all pleas (making uſe of my words) for any thing " becauſe of its uſefulneſs, it is not enough to ſay that " it may be ſerviceable, but it muſt be conſidered, not " only what it may, but what it is likely to produce; " and the greater good or harm like to come from it, " ought to determine the uſe of it?"

You proceed and tell me, that I, " not content to " ſay that force your way applied, (i. e. to bring men " to embrace the truth which muſt ſave them) may be " ſerviceable to bring men to embrace falſhood which " will

" will deſtroy them; and ſo is proper to do as much " harm as good, (which ſeems ſtrange enough;) I add " (to increaſe the wonder) that in your indirect way it " is much more proper and likely to make men receive " and embrace errour, than the truth: and that, 1. Be- " cauſe men out of the right way are apt, and I think " I may ſay apter, to uſe force than others; which is " doubtleſs an irrefragable demonſtration, that force " uſed by the magiſtrate to bring men to receive and " embrace the truth which muſt ſave them, is much " more proper and likely to make men receive errour " than the truth." And then you aſk me, " How we " come to talk here of what men out of the right way " are apt to do, to bring others into their, i. e. a wrong " way; where we are only inquiring, what may be " done to bring men to the right way. For you muſt " put me in mind, you ſay, that this is our queſtion, " viz. Whether the magiſtrate has any right to uſe force, " to bring men to the true religion." Whether the magiſtrate has a right to uſe force in matters of religion, as you more truly ſtate it, p. 78, is the main queſtion between us, I confeſs. But the queſtion here between us is about the uſefulneſs of force your way applied; which being to puniſh diſſenters as diſſenters, to make them conſider, I ſhowed would do more harm than good. And to this you were here anſwering. Whereby, I ſuppoſe, it is plain that the queſtion here is about the uſefulneſs of force, ſo applied. And I doubt not but my readers, who are not concerned, when the queſtion in debate will not ſerve your turn, to have another ſubſtituted, will take this for a regular and natural way of arguing, viz. " That force, your " way applied, is more proper and likely to make men " embrace errour than the truth; becauſe men out of " the right way are as apt, I think I may ſay apter, to " uſe force than others." You need not then aſk as you do, " How we come to talk here of men out of the " right way." You ſee how. If you do not, I know not what help there is for your eyes. And I muſt content myſelf that any other reader that has eyes, will not miſs it. And I wonder that you ſhould: ſince you

know I have on ſeveral occaſions argued againſt the uſe of force in matters of religion, upon a ſuppoſition, that if any one, then all magiſtrates, have a juſt pretence and right to uſe it; which has ſerved you in ſome places for matter of great reproof, and, in others, of ſport and diverſion. But becauſe ſo plain a thing as that was ſo ſtrange to you, that you thought it a ridiculous paradox to ſay, "That for all magiſtrates to ſuppoſe the "religion they believed to be true, was equally juſt "and reaſonable;" and becauſe you took no notice of the words adjoined that proved it, viz. "Unleſs we can "imagine every-where but in England, [or where the "national religion is the true] men believe what at "the ſame time they think to be a lye;" I have taken the pains to prove it to you more at large in another place, and therefore ſhall make bold to uſe it here as an argument againſt force, viz. That if it have any efficacy, it will do more harm than good: "Becauſe men out of "the right way are as apt, or apter to uſe it;" and I ſhall think it a good one till you have anſwered it.

It is a good and a ſure way, and ſhows a zeal to the cauſe, ſtill to hold faſt the concluſion, and, whatever be in debate, return ſtill to one's old poſition. I arguing againſt what you ſay for the uſe of force, viz. "That "force uſed not to convince by its own proper efficacy, "but only to make men conſider, might indirectly, "and at a diſtance do ſome ſervice towards the bring-"ing men to embrace the truth;" after other arguments againſt it, I ſay, that "whatever efficacy there "is in force, your way applied, i. e. to puniſh all, "and none but, diſſenters from the national church, "makes againſt you:" and the firſt reaſon I give for it, is in theſe words: "Becauſe men out of the right "way, are as apt or apter to uſe force than others." Which is what you are here anſwering. And what can be done better to anſwer it, than to the words I have above cited, to ſubjoin theſe following? "Now "whereas our author ſays, that penalties or force is "abſolutely impertinent in this caſe, becauſe it is not "proper to convince the mind; to which you anſwer, "that, though force be not proper to convince the "mind,

" mind, yet it is not abſolutely impertinent in this " caſe, becauſe it may, however, do ſome ſervice to- " wards the bringing men to embrace the truth which " muſt ſave them, by bringing them to conſider thoſe " reaſons and arguments which are proper to convince " the mind; and which, without being forced, they " would not conſider." Here I tell you, " No; but " it is much more proper and likely to make men re- " ceive and embrace errour than truth; becauſe men " out of the right way are as apt, and perhaps apter, " to uſe force than others." Which, you tell me, " is " as good a proof you believe as the thing would ad- " mit: for otherwiſe, you ſuppoſe, I would have given " you a better." And thus you have certainly gained the cauſe. For I having proved that force, your way applied, whatever efficacy it had, would do more harm than good, have not ſufficiently proved that it cannot do ſome ſervice towards the bringing men to embrace the truth; and therefore it is not abſolutely impertinent. But ſince you think this apt enough to prove the uſe of force in matters of religion impertinent, I ſhall farther ſhow you that force, applied your way to make people conſider, and ſo to make them embrace the truth, is impertinent.

Your way is to lay penalties on men for nonconformity, as you ſay, to make men conſider: now here let me aſk any one but you, whether it be not utterly impertinent ſo to lay penalties on men, to make them conſider, when they can avoid thoſe penalties without conſidering? But becauſe it is not enough to prove force, your way applied, utterly impertinent, I ſhall ſhow you in the next place, that were a law made to puniſh not barely nonconformity, but nonconſideration, thoſe penalties, laid on not conſidering, would be utterly impertinent; becauſe it could never be proved that a man had not conſidered the arguments offered him. And therefore all law-makers till you, in all their penal laws about religion, laid all their penalties upon not embracing; and it was againſt that that our author was arguing, when he ſaid penalties, in this caſe, are abſolutely impertinent; becauſe they are not proper to convince the

the mind. For in that case, when penalties are laid on men for not embracing, it is plain they are used as a means to make men embrace: which, since those who are careless in matters of religion can do without considering, and those who are conscientious cannot do without conviction; and since penalties can in no wise convince; this use of them is absolutely impertinent, and will always be so till you can show a way how they can be used in religion, not as motives to embrace, but as motives barely to make men consider. For if you punish them on when they tell you they have considered your arguments, but are not convinced by them; and you judge of their having not considered, by nothing but their not embracing; it is plain you use penalties instead of arguments to convince them; since without conviction, those whom our author pleads for, cannot embrace; and those who do embrace without conviction, it is all one as if they did not embrace at all; they being not one jot the more in the way of salvation; and so penalties are absolutely impertinent. But embracing in the sense of the law, and yours too, when you say men have not considered as they ought as long as they reject; is nothing but outward conformity, or an outward profession of embracing, wherewith the law is satisfied, and upon which the penalties cease. Now penalties used to make men in this sense embrace, are absolutely impertinent to bring men to embrace in earnest, or, as the author calls it, believe: because an outward profession, which in this case is the immediate end to which penalties are directed, and beyond which they do not reach, is no proper means to produce in men consideration, conviction, or believing.

What can be more impertinent than to vex and disease people with the use of force, to no purpose? and that force must needs be to no purpose, which is so applied as to leave the end for which it is pretended to be used, without the means which is acknowledged necessary for its attainment. That this is so in your way of using force, will easily appear from your hypothesis. You tell us at large in your "Argument considered," that men's lusts hinder them from even impartial consideration

deration and examination of matters in religion: and therefore force is neceſſary to remove this hindrance. You tell us likewiſe at large in your letter, that men's corrupt nature and beloved luſts hinder them alſo from embracing the true religion, and that force is neceſſary likewiſe to remove this obſtacle. Now in your way of uſing force, wherein penalties are laid on men till, and no longer than till, they are made outwardly to conform, force is ſo applied, that notwithſtanding the intention of the law-maker, let it be what it will, neither the obſtacle to impartial examination, ariſing from men's luſts, nor the averſion to the embracing the true religion, ariſing from men's corrupt nature, can be removed: unleſs they can be removed without that, which you ſuppoſe neceſſary to their removal. For ſince a man may conform, without being under the neceſſity of impartial examining or embracing on the one hand, or ſuffering the penalties on the other; it is unavoidable, that he ſhould neither impartially examine nor embrace, if penalties are neceſſary to make him do either; becauſe penalties, which are the neceſſary remedies to remove thoſe hindrances, were never applied to them; and ſo thoſe obſtacles, not being removed for want of their neceſſary remedy, muſt continue on to hinder both examining and embracing. For penalties cannot be uſed as a means to any end, or be applied to the procuring any action to be done, which a man from his luſts, or any other cauſe, has an averſion to; but by putting them as it were in one ſcale as a counterbalance to that averſion, and the action in the other ſcale, and putting a man under the neceſſity of chooſing the one or the other: where that is not done, the penalty may be avoided, the averſion or obſtacle hath nothing to remove it, and ſo the action muſt remain undone. So that if penalties be neceſſary to make men impartially examine and really embrace; if penalties are not ſo laid on men as to make the alternative to be either ſuffering the penalties or conforming; it is impoſſible that men who without penalties would not impartially examine, or really embrace, the true religion, ſhould

ever do either; and then I beſeech you conſider whether penalties, your way applied, be impertinent or no.

The neceſſity of penalties is only where there is ſome inclination or bias in a man, whenceſoever ariſing, that keeps him from doing ſomething in his power, which he cannot be brought to without the inconveniencies of ſome penal infliction. The efficacy of penalties lies in this, that the inconvenience to be ſuffered by the penalties overbalance the bias or inclination which leans the man the other way, and ſo removes the obſtacle; and the application of this remedy lies only in putting a man under the neceſſary choice either of doing the action, or ſuffering the penalty: ſo that in whatever caſe a man has not been put under that neceſſity, there penalties have never been applied to the procuring that action: for the obſtacle, or averſion to it, has never had its neceſſary remedy.

Perhaps you will ſay, it is not abſolutely impertinent, becauſe it may poſſibly "do ſome ſervice indirectly and at a diſtance," and be the occaſion that ſome may conſider and embrace. If whatever may by accident contribute to any end, may be uſed not impertinently as a means to that end, nothing that I know can be impertinent; and a penalty of twelve pence a time laid on them for being drunk, may be ſaid to be a pertinent means, to make men carteſians, or conformiſts: becauſe it may indirectly and at a diſtance do ſome ſervice, by being an occaſion to make ſome men conſider their miſpending their time; whereby it may happen that one may betake himſelf to the ſtudy of philoſophy, where he may meet with arguments proper and fit to convince him of the truth of that philoſophy; as another betaking himſelf to the ſtudy of divinity, may conſider arguments proper and fit to make him, whether it be in England, Holland, or Denmark, of the national profeſſion, which he was not of before.

Juſt thus, and no otherwiſe, does twelve pence a Sunday, or any other penalty laid on nonconformity, make men ſtudy and embrace the true religion; and whatever you will call the ſervice it does, direct or indirect, near

or

or at a diſtance, it is plain it produces that effect, and conduces to that end merely by accident; and therefore muſt be allowed to be impertinent to be uſed to that purpoſe.

That your way of uſing force in matters of religion, even in a country where the magiſtrate is of the true religion, is abſolutely impertinent; I ſhall further ſhow you from your own poſition.

Here in the entrance give me leave to obſerve to you, that you confound two things very different, viz. your way of applying force, and the end for which you pretend to uſe it. And this perhaps may be it which contributes to caſt that miſt about your eyes, that you always return to the ſame place, and ſtick to the ſame groſs miſtake. For here you ſay, "Force, your way "applied, i. e. to bring men to embrace the truth "which muſt ſave them:" but, ſir, to bring men to embrace the truth, is not your way of applying force, but the end for which you pretend it is applied. Your way to puniſh men, as you ſay, moderately for being diſſenters from the national religion; this is your way of uſing force. Now if in this way of uſing it, force does ſervice merely by accident, you will then, I ſuppoſe, allow it to be abſolutely impertinent. For you ſay, "If by doing ſervice by accident, I mean doing it "but ſeldom, and beſide the intention of the agent, "you aſſure me that it is not the thing you mean when "you ſay force may, indirectly and at a diſtance, do "ſome ſervice." For in that uſe of force, which you defend, the effect is both intended by him that uſes it, and withal, you "doubt not, ſo often attained, as abun-"dantly to manifeſt the uſefulneſs of it." Whereby it is plain the two marks, whereby you diſtinguiſhed your indirect and at a diſtance uſefulneſs, from that which is by accident, are that that by accident does ſervice but ſeldom, and beſide the intention of the agent, but yours the contrary.

Firſt, as to the intention, you tell us, in the uſe of force, which you defend, "the effect is intended by "him that uſes it;" that is, thoſe who made laws to puniſh nonconformiſts, deſigned thoſe penalties to make

all men, under their power, " conſider ſo as to be con-
" vinced of, and embrace the truths that ſhould ſave
" them." If one ſhould aſk you how you knew it to be their intention, can you ſay, they ever told you ſo? If they did not, then ſo far you and I know their intentions alike. Did they ever ſay ſo in thoſe laws? nor that neither. Thoſe verſed then in the interpretation of laws, will tell you nothing can be known to be the intention of the law-makers in any law, of which the law is wholly ſilent: that way then you cannot know it to have been their intention, if the law ſays nothing of it. Whatever was the intention of former law-makers, if you had read with attention the laſt act of uniformity of Car. II. printed before the common-prayer book, I conclude you would have been better ſatisfied about the intention of the then law-makers in that law; for I think nothing can be plainer to any one who will look into that ſtatute, than that their only end in that law was, what they have expreſſed in theſe words: " And
" to the end that uniformity in the public worſhip of
" God (which is ſo much deſired) may be ſpeedily ef-
" fected;" which was driven with ſuch ſpeed, that if all concerned had opportunity to get and peruſe the then eſtabliſhed liturgy, it is certain they had not over-much time ſeriouſly and deliberately to conſider of all the parts of it before the day ſet for the uſe of it.

But you think they ought to have intended, and therefore they did: and I think they neither ought, nor could, in making thoſe laws, intend ſo impracticable a thing; and therefore they did not. Which being as certain a way of knowledge as yours, if you know it by that way, it is poſſible you and I may at the ſame time know contraries.

But you know it, by their " having provided ſuffi-
" cient means of inſtruction for all under their care, in
" the true religion;" of this ſufficient means, we have ſomething to ſay in another place. Penalties laid expreſly on one fault, have no evidence that they were deſigned to mend another, though there are ſufficient means provided of mending it, if men would make a ſufficient uſe of them; unleſs thoſe two faults are

ſo

ſo connected, as one cannot be mended without the other. Now if men cannot conform, without ſo conſidering as to be convinced of, and embrace the truth that muſt ſave them; you may know that penalties laid on nonconformity, were intended to make men ſo conſider: but if men may conform, without ſo conſidering, one cannot know nor conclude thoſe penalties were intended to make men ſo conſider, whatever proviſion there is made of means of inſtruction.

But you will ſay, it is evident that penalties on nonconformiſts, were intended to make them uſe theſe means of inſtruction, becauſe they are intended for the bringing men to church, the place of inſtruction. That they are intended to bring men to church, the place of preaching, that I grant; but that thoſe penalties that are laid on men, for not coming to church, can be known thereby to be intended to make men ſo conſider, as to be convinced and embrace the true religion, that I deny: and it is utterly impoſſible it ſhould be ſo, if what you ſay be true, where you tell us, that "the "magiſtrates concern themſelves for compliance or "conformity, only as the fruit of their conviction." If therefore the magiſtrates are concerned for men's conformity, only as the fruit of their conviction, and coming to church be that conformity; coming to church cannot be intended as a means of their conviction: unleſs it be intended they ſhould be convinced, before they are convinced.

But to ſhow you, that you cannot pretend the penalty of laws for conformity to proceed from a care of the ſouls of all under the magiſtrate's power, and ſo to be intended to make them all conſider, in any ſenſe: can you, or any one, know, or ſuppoſe, that penalties which are laid by the law on nonconformity, are intended to make all men conſider; where it is known that a great number, under the magiſtrate's power, are diſpenſed with, and privileged from thoſe penalties? How many, omitting the jews, are there, for example, in the king of England's dominions, under his care and power, of the Walloon and French church; to whom force is never applied, and they live in ſecurity from it? How

many pagans are there in the plantations, many whereof born in his dominions, of whom there was never any care taken, that they ſhould ſo much as come to church, or be in the leaſt inſtructed in the chriſtian religion? And yet muſt we believe, or can you pretend, that the magiſtrate's uſe of force, againſt nonconformiſts, is to make all his ſubjects conſider, "ſo as to be convinced "of, and embrace the truth that muſt ſave them?" If you ſay, in your way you mean no ſuch indulgence: I anſwer, the queſtion is not of yours, but the magiſtrate's intention; though what your intention is, who would have the want of conſideration, or knowledge, in conformiſts, exempt from force, is viſible enough.

Again, Thoſe penalties cannot be ſuppoſed to be intended to make men conſider; which are laid on thoſe, who have, or may have already conſidered; and ſuch you muſt grant to be the penalties laid in England on nonconformiſts; unleſs you will deny, that any nonconformiſt has, or can conſider, ſo as to be convinced, or believe, and embrace the truth that muſt ſave him. So that you cannot vouch the intention of the magiſtrate, where his laws ſay nothing; much leſs affirm, that force is intended to produce a certain end in all his ſubjects, which is not applied to them all, and is applied to ſome who have attained that end already: unleſs you have a privilege to affirm, againſt all appearance, whatſoever may ſerve your cauſe. But to learn ſome moderation in this, I ſhall ſend you to my pagans and mahometans. For whatever charitable wiſhes magiſtrates may ſometimes have in their thoughts, which I meddle not with; nobody can ſay, that in making the laws, or in the uſe of force, we are ſpeaking of, they intended to make men conſider and examine, ſo as "to be convinced "of, and heartily to embrace the truth that muſt ſave "them," but he that gives himſelf the liberty to ſay any thing.

The ſervice that force does, indirectly and at a diſtance, you tell us in the following page, is to make people "apply themſelves to the uſe of thoſe means, "and helps, which are proper to make them what they "are deſigned to be." In the caſe before us, What

are

are men designed to be? Holy believers of the gospel in this world, without which no salvation, no seeing of God in the next. Let us see now, whether force, your way applied, can be suited to such a design, and so intended for that end.

You hold, that all out of the national church, where the religion of the national church is true, should be punished, and ought to have force used to them: and again, you grant that those who are in the communion of the national church, ought not to be punished, or be under the stroke of force; nor indeed in your way can they. If now the effect be to prevail with men to consider as they ought, so that they may become what they are designed to be: how can any one think, that you, and they who use force thus, intend, in the use of it, that men should really be christians, both in persuasion and practice, without which there is no salvation; if they leave off force before they have attained that effect? Or how can it be imagined, that they intend any thing but conformity by their use of force, if they leave off the use of it as soon as men conform? unless you will say that an outward conformity to the national church, whose religion is the true religion, is such an embracing of the truth as is sufficient to salvation: or that an outward profession of the christian religion is the same with being really a christian; which possibly you will not be very forward to do, when you recollect what you meet with in the sermons, and printed discourses, of divines of the church of England, concerning the ignorance and irreligion of conformists themselves: For penalties can never be thought, by any one, but he that can think against common sense, and what he pleases, to be intended for any end; which by that constitution, and law whereby they are imposed, are to cease before that end be attained. And will you say, that all who are conformable, have so well considered, that they believe, and heartily embrace the truths of the gospel, that must save them: when perhaps it will be found that a great many conformists do not so much as understand them? But the ignorance or irreligiousness to be found amongst conformists, which your way of

talking forces me in ſome places to take notice of, let me here tell you once for all, I lay not the blame of upon conformity, but upon your uſe of force to make men conform. For whatever the religion be, true or falſe, it is natural for force, and penalty, ſo applied, to bring the irreligious, and thoſe who are careleſs and unconcerned for the true, into the national profeſſion: but whether it be fitter for ſuch to be kept out, rather than by force to be driven into, the communion of any church, and owned as members of it; thoſe who have a due care and reſpect for truly religious and pious conformiſts, were beſt conſider.

But farther, if, as you ſay, the oppoſition to the true religion lies only in men's luſts, it having light and ſtrength enough, were it not for that, to prevail: and it is upon that account only that force is neceſſary; there is no neceſſity at all to uſe force on men, only till they conform, and no farther; ſince I think you will not deny, but that the corruption of human nature is as great in conformiſts as in nonconformiſts; in the profeſſors of, as in the diſſenters from, the national religion. And therefore either force was not neceſſary before, or elſe it is neceſſary ſtill, after men are conformiſts; unleſs you will ſay, that it is harder for a man to be a profeſſor, than a chriſtian indeed: and that the true religion, by its own light and ſtrength, can, without the help of force, prevail over a man's luſts, and the corruption of his nature; but it has need of the help of force, to make him a conformiſt, and an outward profeſſor. And ſo much for the effect, which is intended by him that uſes it, in that uſe of force which you defend.

The other argument you bring to ſhow, that your indirect and at a diſtance uſefulneſs of force, your way applied, is not by accident, is the frequent ſucceſs of it. Which I think is not the true mark of what is not by accident: for an effect may not be by accident, though it has never been produced but once; and is certainly as little by accident the firſt time, as when it has been produced a thouſand times. That then, by which any thing is excuſed from being by accident, is not the frequency

quency of the event, but that whereon the frequency of the event depends, when frequent trials are made; and that is the proper, natural, direct efficacy of the cauſe or means, which produces the effect. As in the caſe before us, penalties are the cauſe or means uſed to produce an end; the proper and immediate effect of penalties, is to produce ſome pain or inconvenience; and the natural effect of that is to make a man, who naturally flies from all pain or inconvenience, to endeavour to avoid; whereby it naturally and directly works upon the will of man, by propoſing to him this unavoidable choice of doing ſome action, or enduring the pain or inconvenience of the penalty annexed to its omiſſion. When the pain of doing the action is outweighed in the ſenſe of him that lies under the penalty, the pain, that by the law is annexed to the omiſſion, operates upon his will, as naturally, as thirteen ounces in one ſcale, laid againſt twelve ounces in the other, incline the balance, and bring it down on that ſide. And this is by a direct and natural efficacy, wherein there is nothing of chance.

Let us ſee then, how far this will go in your indirect and at a diſtance uſefulneſs. In your method, the action you propoſe to be done, is conſidering, or a ſevere and impartial examining matters of religion, which, you tell us, men by their great negligence or averſion are kept from doing. What now is a proper means to produce this? "Penalties, without which, you tell us, "it will not be done." How now is it applied in your method? Conformity, and men's neglect or averſion to it, is laid in one ſcale, and the penalty joined to the omiſſion of it, laid in the other; and in this caſe, if the inconvenience of the penalty overweighs the pains of, or averſion to conformity, it does by a direct and natural efficacy produce conformity: but if it produces a ſevere and impartial examination, that is merely by accident; becauſe the inconvenience of the penalty is not laid againſt men's averſion or backwardneſs to examine impartially, as a counterbalance to that, but againſt their averſion or backwardneſs to conform; and ſo whatever it does, indirectly and at a diſtance, it is certain

tain its making men ſeverely and impartially examine, if ever that happens, is as much by accident, as it would be by accident, if a piece of lead in one ſcale, as a counterpoiſe to feathers in the oppoſite ſcale, ſhould move or weigh down gold that was put in the ſcale of another pair of balances, which had no counterpoiſe laid againſt it. Unleſs you will ſay there is a neceſſary connexion between conformity, and a ſevere and impartial examination.

But you will ſay, perhaps, that though it be not poſſible that penalties ſhould produce examination but by mere accident, becauſe examination has no neceſſary connexion with conformity, or the profeſſion of any religion; yet ſince there are ſome who will not take up any profeſſion without a ſevere and impartial examination, penalties for nonconformity will, by a direct and natural efficacy, produce examination in all ſuch. To which I anſwer, That thoſe are, if we may believe what you ſay, ſo very few, that this your remedy, which you put into the magiſtrate's hands to bring all his ſubjects to conſider and examine, will not work upon one in a thouſand; nay, it can work on none at all, to make them ſeverely and impartially examine, but merely by accident. For if they are men, whom a ſlight and partial examination, which upon your principles you muſt ſay, ſufficed to make nonconformiſts, a ſlight and partial examination will as well ſerve to make them conformiſts; and ſo penalties laid on them to make them conform, can only by accident produce a ſevere and impartial examination, in ſuch men, who can take up the profeſſion of any religion without a ſevere and impartial examination; no more than it can otherwiſe than by accident produce any examination in thoſe who, without any examination, can take up the profeſſion of any religion.

And in thoſe very few, who take not up the profeſſion of any religion without a ſevere and impartial examination, that penalties can do any ſervice, to bring them either to the truth that muſt ſave them, or ſo much as to outward conformity, but merely by accident; that is alſo evident. Becauſe all ſuch in a country, where

where they diſſent from the national religion, muſt neceſſarily have ſeverely and impartially examined already, or elſe you deſtroy the ſuppoſition this argument is built on, viz. that they are men who do ſeverely and impartially examine before they chooſe. And if you lay, or continue your penalties on men, that have ſo examined; it is plain you uſe them inſtead of reaſons and arguments: in which uſe of them, you confeſs they have no proper efficacy, and therefore if they do any ſervice, it is merely by accident.

But now let us ſee the ſucceſs you boaſt of, and for that you tell us, that you doubt not but it is "ſo often "attained, as abundantly to manifeſt the uſefulneſs of "it." You ſpeak here of it, as a thing tried, and ſo known, that you doubt not. Pray tell us where your moderate (for great ones you acknowledge to do harm, and to be uſeleſs) penalties have been uſed, with ſuch ſucceſs, that we may be paſt doubt too. If you can ſhow no ſuch place; do you not vouch experience where you have none? and ſhow a willingneſs not to doubt, where you have no aſſurance? In all countries, where any force is uſed to bring men to the profeſſion of the national religion, and to outward conformity, it is not to be doubted, but that force joining with their natural corruption, in bringing them into the way of preferment, countenance, protection, eaſe, and impunity, ſhould eaſily draw in all the looſe and careleſs in matters of religion, which are every-where the far greater number: but is it thoſe you count upon, and will you produce them as examples of what force has done to make men conſider, ſtudy, and embrace the true religion? Did the penalties laid on nonconformity make you "conſider, ſo as to ſtudy, be convinced, and em-"brace the true religion?" Or can you give an inſtance of any one, in whom it produced this effect? If you cannot, you will have ſome reaſon to doubt of what you have ſaid, and not to be ſo confident that the effect you talk of, is ſo often attained. Not that I deny, but that God may ſometimes have made theſe puniſhments the occaſions to men of ſetting themſelves ſeriouſly on conſidering religion; and thence they may have come

come into the national religion upon a real conviction: but the inſtances of it I believe to be ſo few, that you will have reaſon to remember your own words, where you ſpeak of ſuch things as "Any way, at any time, "upon any perſon, by any accident, may be uſeful to- "wards the promoting of true religion: if men ſhould "thence take occaſion to apply ſuch things generally; "who ſees not, that however they might chance to hit "right in ſome few caſes, yet, upon the whole matter, "they would certainly do a great deal more harm than "good." You and I know a country wherein, not long ſince, greater ſeverities were uſed than you pretend to approve of. Were there not, for all that, great numbers of ſeveral profeſſions ſtood out, who, by your rule, ought now to have your moderate penalties tried upon them? And can you think leſs degrees of force can work, and often, as you ſay, prevail, where greater could not? But perhaps they might prevail on many of thoſe to return, who having been brought into the communion of the church by former penal laws, have now upon the relaxation left it again. A manifeſt demonſtration, is it not? that "their compliance was "the fruit of their conviction; and that the magiſtrate "was concerned for their compliance only as the fruit "of their conviction:" when they, as ſoon as any relaxation of thoſe laws took off the penalties, left again the communion of the national church? For the leſſening the number of conformiſts, is, I ſuppoſe, one of thoſe things which you ſay your "eyes cannot but ſee "at this time;" and which you, with concern, impute to the late relaxation. A plain evidence how preſumable it is, even in your own opinion, that thoſe who conform, do it upon real conviction.

To conclude, theſe proofs, though I do not pretend to bring as good as the thing will admit, will ſerve my turn to ſhow, that force is impertinent; ſince by your own confeſſion it has no direct efficacy to convince men, and, by its being indirect and at a diſtance uſeful, is not at all diſtinguiſhed from being barely ſo by accident: ſince you can neither prove it to be intended for that end, nor frequently to ſucceed; which are the two marks

marks whereby you put a difference between indirect and at a distance, and by accident: this, I say, is enough to show what the author said, is true, that the use of force is wholly impertinent. Which, whatever others do, you upon another reason must be forced to allow.

You profess yourself of the church of England, and if I may guess, are so far of it, as to have subscribed the XXXIX Articles; which if you have done, and assented to what you subscribed, you must necessarily allow that all force, used for the bringing men to the true religion, is "absolutely impertinent;" for that must be absolutely impertinent to be used as a means, which can contribute nothing at all to the end for which it is used. The end here is to make a man a true christian, that he may be saved; and he is then, and then only, a true christian, and in the way of salvation, when he believes, and with sincerity obeys the gospel. By the thirteenth article of the church of England, you hold, that WORKS DONE BEFORE THE GRACE OF CHRIST, AND THE INSPIRATION OF HIS SPIRIT, ARE NOT PLEASING TO GOD; FOR AS MUCH AS THEY SPRING NOT OF FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST; NEITHER DO THEY MAKE MEN MEET TO RECEIVE GRACE, OR, AS THE SCHOOL-AUTHORS SAY, DESERVE GRACE OF CONGRUITY; YEA RATHER, FOR THAT THEY ARE NOT DONE AS GOD HAS WILLED AND COMMANDED THEM TO BE DONE, WE DOUBT NOT BUT THEY HAVE THE NATURE OF SIN. Now if it be impertinent to use force to make a man do more than he can, and a man can do nothing to procure grace, unless sin can procure it; and without grace, a man cannot believe, or live so as to be a true christian; it is certainly wholly impertinent to use force to bring a man to be truly a christian. To hear and consider, is in men's power, you will say, and to that force may be pertinent; I grant to make men hear, but not to make them consider in your sense, which, you tell us, is to "consider so as to embrace;" if you mean by embracing any thing but outward conformity: and that according to your article contributes nothing to the attaining of grace; because without grace your article says it is a sin; and to conform to, and outwardly profess a religion

gion which a man does not underſtand and heartily believe, every one, I think, judges to be a ſin, and no fit means to procure the grace of God.

But you tell us, "That God denies his grace to none "who ſeriouſly aſk it." If that be ſo, methinks force ſhould moſt properly and pertinently be uſed to make men ſeriouſly pray to God for grace. But how, I beſeech you, will this ſtand with your thirteenth article? For if you mean by ſeriouſly, ſo as will make his ſeeking acceptable to God; that cannot be, becauſe he is ſuppoſed yet to want grace, which alone can make it acceptable: and if his aſking has the nature of ſin, as in the article you do not doubt but it has, can you expect that ſinning ſhould procure the grace of God? You will I fear here, without ſome great help in a very nice diſtinction from the ſchool-authors, be forced either to renounce your article in the plain ſenſe of it, and ſo become a diſſenter from the church of England; or elſe acknowledge force to be wholly impertinent to the buſineſs of true religion and ſalvation.

Another reaſon I gave againſt the uſefulneſs of force in matters of religion, was, "Becauſe the magiſtrates "of the world, being few of them in the right way; "not one of ten, take which ſide you will, perhaps "not one of a hundred, being of the true religion; it "is likely your indirect way of uſing force would do a "hundred, or at leaſt ten times as much harm as good." To which you reply, "Which would have been to the "purpoſe if you had aſſerted that every magiſtrate may "uſe force, your indirect way (or any way) to bring "men to his own religion, whatever that be. But if "you aſſert no ſuch thing, (as no man you think but "an atheiſt will aſſert it) then this is quite beſide the "buſineſs." I think I have proved, that if magiſtrates of the true religion may uſe force to bring men to their religion, every magiſtrate may uſe force to bring men to his own religion, when he thinks it the true, and then do you look where the atheiſm will light.

In the next paragraph, having quoted theſe following words of mine, where I ſay, "Under another pretence, "you put into the magiſtrate's hands as much force to

"bring

" bring them to his religion, as any the openeſt perſecu-
" tors can pretend to. I aſk what difference is there
" between puniſhing them to bring them to maſs, and
" puniſhing them to make them conſider thoſe reaſons
" and arguments which are proper and ſufficient to
" convince them that they ought to go to maſs?" You reply: " A queſtion which you ſhall then think your-
" ſelf obliged to anſwer, when I have produced thoſe
" reaſons and arguments which are proper and ſuffi-
" cient to convince men that they ought to go to maſs." But if you had not omitted the three or four immediately preceding lines, (an art to ſerve a good cauſe, which puts me in mind of my pagans and mahometans) the reader would have ſeen that your reply was nothing at all to my argument. My words were theſe,

" Eſpecially, if you conſider, that as the magiſtrate
" will certainly uſe it [force] to force men to hearken
" to the proper miniſters of his religion, let it be what
" it will; ſo you having ſet no time nor bounds to this
" conſideration of arguments and reaſons ſhort of being
" convinced, you under another," &c. My argument is to ſhow of what advantage force, your way applied, is like to be to the true religion, ſince it puts as much force into the magiſtrate's hands as the openeſt perſecutors can pretend to, which the magiſtrates of wrong perſuaſions may and will uſe as well as thoſe of the true; becauſe your way ſets no other bounds to conſidering, ſhort of complying. And then I aſk, " What difference
" there is between puniſhing you to bring you to maſs,
" or puniſhing you to conſider thoſe reaſons and argu-
" ments which are proper and ſufficient to convince
" you that you ought to go to maſs?" To which you reply, That it is a " queſtion you ſhall then think
" yourſelf obliged to anſwer, when I have produced
" thoſe reaſons and arguments that are proper and ſuf-
" ficient to convince men that they ought to go to maſs." Whereas the objection is the ſame, whether there be, or be not, reaſons and arguments proper to convince men, that they ought to go to maſs; for men muſt be puniſhed on till they have ſo conſidered as to comply: and what difference is there then between puniſhing

ing men to bring them to maſs, and puniſhing them to make them conſider ſo as to go to maſs? But though I pretend not to produce any reaſons and arguments proper and ſufficient to convince you or all men, that they ought to go to maſs; yet do you think there are none proper and ſufficient to convince any men? And that all the papiſts in the world go to maſs without believing it their duty? And whoſoever believes it to be his duty, does it upon reaſons and arguments, proper and ſufficient to convince him, (though perhaps not to convince another) that it is ſo; or elſe I imagine he would never believe at all. What think you of thoſe great numbers of Japaneſes, that reſiſted all ſorts of torments, even to death itſelf, for the Romiſh religion? And had you been in France ſome years ſince, who knows but the arguments the king of France produced might have been proper and ſufficient to have convinced you that you ought to go to maſs? I do not by this, think you leſs confident of the truth of your religion, than you profeſs to be. But arguments ſet on with force, have a ſtrange efficacy upon human frailty; and he muſt be well aſſured of his own ſtrength, who can peremptorily affirm, he is ſure he ſhould have ſtood what above a million of people ſunk under: amongſt which, it is great confidence to ſay, there was not one ſo well perſuaded of the truth of his religion, as you are of yours; though ſome of them gave great proofs of their perſuaſion in their ſufferings for it. But what the neceſſary method of force may be able to do, to bring any one, in your ſenſe, to any religion, i. e. to an outward profeſſion of it; he that thinks himſelf ſecure againſt, muſt have a greater aſſurance of himſelf, than the weakneſs of decayed and depraved nature will well allow. If you have any ſpell againſt the force of arguments, driven with penalties and puniſhments, you will do well to teach it the world; for it is the hard luck of well-meaning people to be often miſled by them; and even the confident themſelves have not ſeldom fallen under them, and betrayed their weakneſs.

To my demanding if you meant "reaſons and arguments proper and ſufficient to convince men of the truth,

" truth, why did you not ſay ſo?" You reply, " As if " it were poſſible for any man that reads your anſwer to " think otherwiſe." Whoever reads that paſſage in your A. p. 5. cannot poſſibly think you meant to ſpeak out, and poſſibly you found ſome difficulty to add any thing to your words, (which are theſe, " Force uſed to bring " men to conſider reaſons and arguments proper and " ſufficient to convince them") that might determine their ſenſe. For if you had ſaid, to convince them of truth; then the magiſtrate muſt have made laws, and uſed force to make men ſearch after truth in general, and that would not have ſerved your turn: if you had ſaid to convince them of the truth of the magiſtrate's religion, that would too manifeſtly have put the power in every magiſtrate's hands, which, you tell us, " none " but an atheiſt will ſay." If you had ſaid, to convince them of the truth of your religion, that had looked too ridiculous to be owned, though it were the thing you meant; and therefore in this ſtrait, where nothing you could ſay would well fit your purpoſe, you wiſely chooſe to leave the ſenſe imperfect, and name nothing they were to be convinced of; but leave it to be collected by your reader out of your diſcourſe, rather than add three words to make it good grammar, as well as intelligible ſenſe.

To my ſaying, " That if you pretend it muſt be ar- " guments to convince men of the truth, it would in " this caſe do you little ſervice; becauſe the maſs in " France is as much ſuppoſed the truth, as the liturgy " here." You reply, " So that it ſeems, that in my opi- " nion, whatſoever is ſuppoſed the truth, it is the truth, " for otherwiſe this reaſon of mine is none at all." If, in my opinion, the ſuppoſition of truth authorizes the magiſtrate to uſe the ſame means to bring men to it, as if it were true; my argument will hold good, without taking all to be true which ſome men ſuppoſe true. According to this anſwer of yours, to ſuppoſe or believe his religion the true, is not enough to authorize the magiſtrate to uſe force; he muſt know, i. e. be infallibly certain, that his is the true religion. We will for once ſuppoſe you our magiſtrate, with force promoting our

national religion. I will not ask you, whether you know that all required of conformists, is necessary to salvation: but will suppose one of my pagans asking you, whether you know christianity to be the true religion? If you say, Yes; he will ask you how you know it? and no doubt but you will give the answer, whereby our Saviour proved his mission, John v. 36, that "the works which our Saviour did, bear witness "of him, that the Father sent him." The miracles that Christ did, are a proof of his being sent from God, and so his religion the true religion. But then you will be asked again, whether you know that he did those miracles, as well as those who saw them done? If you answer, Yes; then it is plain that miracles are not yet withdrawn, but do still accompany the christian religion with all the efficacy and evidence that they had upon the eye-witnesses of them; and then, upon your own grounds, there will be no necessity of the magistrate's assistance; miracles still supplying the want of it. If you answer, that matter of fact done out of your sight, at such a distance of time and place, cannot be known to you as certainly, as it was to the eye-witnesses of it, but that you upon very good grounds firmly believe it; you are then come to believing, that yours is the true religion, and if that be sufficient to authorize you to use force, it will authorize any other magistrate of any other religion to use force also. For whoever believes any thing, takes it to be true, and as he thinks upon good grounds; and those often who believe on the weakest grounds, have the strongest confidence: and thus all magistrates who believe their religion to be true, will be obliged to use force to promote it, as if it were the true.

To my saying that the usefulness of force, your way applied, amounts to no more but this. that it is not impossible but that it may be useful: You reply, "I leave it to be judged by what has been said;" and I leave it to you yourself to judge: only, that you may not forget, I shall here remind you in short of some of the reasons I have to say so: 1. You grant that force has no direct efficacy to bring men to embrace the truth.

2. You

2. You distinguish the indirect and at a distance usefulness of your force, from that which is barely by accident; by these two marks, viz. First, That punishment on dissenters for nonconformity, is, by those that use it, intended to make men consider: and Secondly, That your moderate punishments, by experience, are found often successful; and your having neither of these marks, it must be concluded to be useful only by accident: and such an usefulness, as I said, "One cannot deny to "auricular confession, doing of penance, going pilgri- "mages to saints, and what not? Yet our church does "not think fit to use them; though it cannot be denied "but they may have some of your indirect and at a "distance usefulness; that is, perhaps may do some "service indirectly, and by accident." If the intention of those that use them, and the success they will tell you they find in the use of them, be a proof of doing service more than by accident; that cannot be denied to them more than to penalties, your way applied. To which let me add, that the niceness and difficulty there is, to hit that just degree of force, which, according to your hypothesis, must be neither so much as to do harm, nor so little as to be ineffectual; for you yourself cannot determine it; makes its usefulness yet more uncertain and accidental. And after all, let its efficacy to work upon men's minds be what it will, great or little, it being sure to be employed ten, or, possibly, a hundred times to bring men to errour, for once that it is employed to bring men to the truth; and where it chances to be employed, on the side of truth, it being liable to make a hundred, or perhaps a thousand outward conformists, for one true and sincere convert; I leave it also to be judged what usefulness it is like to be of.

To show the usefulness of force, your way applied, I said, "Where the law punished dissenters without tell- "ing them it is to make them consider, they may through "ignorance and oversight neglect to do it." Your answer is, "But where the law provides sufficient means "of instruction for all, as well as punishment for dissen- "ters, it is so plain to all concerned, that the punishment "is intended to make them consider, that you see no

" danger of men's neglecting to do it, through igno-
" rance or overſight." I hope you mean by conſider, ſo to conſider as not only to embrace in an outward profeſſion, for then all you ſay is but a poor fallacy, for ſuch a conſidering amounts to no more but bare outward conformity; but ſo to conſider, ſtudy, and examine matters of religion, as really to embrace what one is convinced to be the true, with faith and obedience. If it be ſo plain and eaſy to underſtand, that a law, that ſpeaks nothing of it, ſhould yet be intended to make men conſider, ſearch, and ſtudy, to find out the truth that muſt ſave them; I wiſh you had ſhowed us this plainneſs. For I confeſs many of all degrees, that I have purpoſely aſked about it, did not ever ſee, or ſo much as dream, that the act of uniformity, or againſt conventicles, or the penalties in either of them, were ever intended to make men ſeriouſly ſtudy religion, and make it their buſineſs to find the truth which muſt ſave them; but barely to make men conform. But perhaps you have met with handicrafts-men, and country-farmers, maid-ſervants, and day-labourers, who have quicker underſtandings, and reaſon better about the intention of the law; for theſe as well as others are concerned. If you have not, it is to be feared your ſaying " it is ſo
" plain, that you ſee no danger of men's neglecting to
" do it, through ignorance or overſight," is more for its ſerving your purpoſe, than from any experience you have that it is ſo.

When you will inquire into this matter, you will, I gueſs, find the people ſo ignorant amidſt that great plainneſs you ſpeak of, that not one of twenty of any degree, amongſt the conformiſts or nonconformiſts, ever underſtood the penalty of twelve pence a ſunday, or any other of our penal laws againſt nonconformity, to be intended to ſet men upon ſtudying the true religion, and impartially examining what is neceſſary to ſalvation. And if you would come to Hudibras's deciſion, I believe he would have a good wager of it, who ſhould give you a guinea for each one who had thought ſo, and receive but a ſhilling for every one who had not. Indeed you do not ſay, it is plain every-where, but only
" where

" where the law provides ſufficient means of inſtruc-
" tion for all, as well as puniſhments for diſſenters."
From whence, I think it will follow, that that contributes nothing to make it plain; or elſe that the law has not provided ſufficient means of inſtruction in England, where ſo very few find this to be ſo plain. If by this ſufficient proviſion of means of inſtruction for all, you mean perſons maintained at the publick charge to preach and officiate in the publick exerciſe of the national religion; I ſuppoſe you needed not this reſtriction, there being few places which have an eſtabliſhed national religion, where there is not ſuch means of inſtruction provided; if you intend any other means of inſtruction, I know none the law has provided in England but the XXXIX articles, the liturgy, and the ſcripture; and how either of them by itſelf, or theſe all together, with a national clergy, make it plain, that the penalties laid on nonconformity, are intended to make men conſider, ſtudy, and impartially examine matters of religion, you would do well to ſhow. For magiſtrates uſually know, (and therefore make their laws accordingly) that the people ſeldom carry either their interpretation or practice beyond what the expreſs letter of the law requires of them. You would do well alſo to ſhow, that a ſufficient proviſion of means of inſtruction, cannot but be underſtood to require an effectual uſe of them, which the law that makes that proviſion ſays nothing of: but on the contrary, contents itſelf with ſomething very ſhort of it: for conformity, or coming to church, is at leaſt as far from conſidering, ſtudying, and impartially examining matters of religion, ſo as to embrace the truth upon conviction and with an obedient heart; as being preſent at a diſcourſe concerning mathematics, and ſtudying mathematics, ſo as to become a knowing mathematician, are different one from the other.

People generally think they have done their duties abundantly, if they have been at church, whether they mind any thing done there or no: this they call ſerving of God, as if it were their whole duty; ſo backward are they to underſtand more, though it be plain the law

of God expreſly requires more. But that they have fully ſatisfied the law of the land, no-body doubts; nor is it eaſy to anſwer what was replied to me on this occaſion, viz. If the magiſtrate intended any thing more in thoſe laws but conformity, would he not have ſaid it? To which let me add, if the magiſtrate intended conformity as the fruit of conviction, would he not have taken ſome care to have them inſtructed before they conformed, and examined when they did? But it is preſumable their ignorance, corruption and luſts, all drop off in the church-porch, and that they become perfectly good chriſtians as ſoon as they have taken their ſeats in the church.

If there be any whom your example or writing hath inſpired with acuteneſs enough to find out this; I ſuſpect the vulgar, who have ſcarce time and thought enough to make inferences from the law, which ſcarce one of ten of them ever ſo much as reads, or perhaps underſtands when read; are ſtill, and will be ignorant of it: and thoſe who have the time and abilities to argue about it, will find reaſon to think that thoſe penalties were not intended to make men examine the doctrine and ceremonies of religion; ſince thoſe who ſhould examine, are prohibited by thoſe very laws to follow their own judgments, (which is the very end and uſe of examination) if they at all differ from the religion eſtabliſhed by law. Nor can it appear ſo "plain to all con-" cerned, that the puniſhment is intended to make them " conſider and examine," when they ſee the puniſhments you ſay are to make people conſider, ſpare thoſe who conſider and examine matters of religion, as little as any of the moſt ignorant and careleſs diſſenters.

To my ſaying, "Some diſſenters may have conſider-" ed already, and then force employed upon them muſt " needs be uſeleſs; unleſs you can think it uſeful to " puniſh a man to make him do that which he has " done already:" You reply, "No man who rejects " truth neceſſary to his ſalvation, has conſidered already " as he ought to conſider." The words "as he ought," are not, as I take it, in the queſtion: and ſo your anſwer is, "No man who rejects the truth neceſſary to " his

" his salvation, hath considered, studied, or examined mat-
" ters of religion." But we will let that go: and yet with that allowance, your answer will be nothing to the purpose, unless you will dare to say, that all dissenters reject truth necessary to salvation. For without the supposition, that all dissenters reject the truth necessary to salvation, the argument and answer will stand thus: It may be useless to punish all dissenters to make them consider, because some of them may have considered already. To which, the answer is, Yes, some of them may have considered already, but those who reject truth necessary to their salvation, have not considered as they ought.

I said, " The greatest part of mankind, being not
" able to discern betwixt truth and falshood, that de-
" pends upon long and many proofs, and remote con-
" sequences; nor having ability enough to discover
" the false grounds, and resist the captious and falla-
" cious arguments of learned men versed in controver-
" sies; are so much more exposed, by the force, which
" is used to make them hearken to the information and
" instruction of men appointed to it by the magistrate,
" or those of his religion, to be led into falshood and
" errour, than they are likely this way to be brought to
" embrace the truth which must save them; by how
" much the national religions of the world are, beyond
" comparison, more of them false or erroneous, than
" such as have God for their author, and truth for their
" standard." You reply, " If the first part of this be true,
" then an infallible guide, and implicit faith, are more
" necessary than ever you thought them." Whether you conclude from thence or no, that then there will be a necessity of an infallible guide, and an implicit faith, it is nevertheless true, that the greatest part of men are unable to discern, as I said, between truth and falshood depending upon long and many proofs, &c. But whether that will make an infallible guide necessary or no, imposition in matters of religion certainly will: since there can be nothing more absurd imaginable, than that a man should take upon him to impose on others in matters of their eternal concernment, without being, or so much as pretending to be infallible: for colour it with the name of considering, as much as you please,

as long as it is to make men consider as they ought, and considering as they ought, is so to consider, as to embrace; the using of force to make men consider, and the using of force to make them embrace any doctrine or opinion, is the same thing: and to show a difference betwixt imposing an opinion, and using force to make it be embraced, would require such a piece of subtilty, as I heard lately from a learned man out of the pulpit, who told us, that though two things, he named, were all one, yet for distinction's sake he would divide them. Your reason for the necessity of an infallible guide, is, "For if the greatest part of mankind be not able to "discern betwixt truth and falshood, in matters con- "cerning their salvation (as I must mean if I speak to "the purpose) their condition must needs be very "hazardous, if they have not some guide or judge, to "whose determination and direction they may securely "resign themselves." And therefore they must resign themselves to the determination and direction of the civil magistrate, or be punished. Here it is like you will have something again to say to my modesty and conscience, for imputing to you what you no-where say. I grant it, in direct words, but in effect, as plainly as may be. The magistrate may impose sound creeds and decent ceremonies, i. e. such as he thinks fit, for what is sound and decent he I hope must be judge; and if he be judge of what is sound and decent, it amounts to no more but what he thinks fit: and if it be not what he thinks fit, why is one ceremony preferred to another? Why one doctrine of the scripture put into the creed and articles, and another as sound left out? They are truths necessary to salvation. We shall see that in good time: here only I ask, does the magistrate only believe them to be truths and ceremonies necessary to salvation, or does he certainly know them to be so? If you say he only believes them to be so, and that that is enough to authorize him to impose them, you, by your own confession, authorize magistrates to impose what they think necessary for the salvation of their subjects souls; and so the king of France did what he was obliged to,

when

when he said he would have all his subjects saved, and so fell to dragooning.

If you say the magistrate certainly knows them to be necessary to salvation, we are luckily come to an infallible guide. Well then, the sound creeds are agreed on; the confession and liturgy are framed; the ceremonies pitched on; and the terms of communion thus set up; you have religion established by law: and what now is the subject to do? He is to conform. No; he must first consider. Who bids him consider? No-body; he may, if he pleases; but the law says nothing to him of it: consider or not consider, if he conforms, it is well, and he is approved of and admitted. He does consider the best he can, but finds some things he does not understand, other things he cannot believe, assent or consent to. What now is to be done with him? He must either be punished on, or resign himself up to the determination and direction of the civil magistrate; which, till you can find a better name for it, we will call implicit faith. And thus you have provided a remedy for the hazardous condition of weak understandings, in that which you suppose necessary in the case, viz. an infallible guide and implicit faith, in matters concerning men's salvation.

But you say, "For your part, you know of no such "guide of God's appointing." Let that be your rule, and the magistrate with his coactive power will be left out too. You think there is no need of any such; because notwithstanding the long and many proofs and remote consequences, the false grounds and the captious and fallacious arguments of learned men versed in controversies, "with which I (as well as those of the Ro- "man communion) endeavour to amuse you; through "the goodness of God the truth which is necessary to "salvation, lies so obvious and exposed to all that sin- "cerely and diligently seek it, that no such person shall "ever fail of attaining the knowledge of it." This then is your answer, that "truths necessary to salvation are "obvious;" so that those who seek them sincerely and diligently, are not in danger to be misled or exposed in those to errour, by the weakness of their understandings.

This

This will be a good anſwer to what I objected from the danger moſt are in to be led into errour, by the magiſtrate's adding force to the arguments for their national eſtabliſhed religions; when you have ſhown that nothing is wont to be impoſed in national religions, but what is neceſſary to ſalvation; or which will a little better accommodate your hypotheſis, when you can ſhow that nothing is impoſed, or required for communion with the church of England, but what is neceſſary to ſalvation; and conſequently is very eaſy and obvious to be known, and diſtinguiſhed from falſhood. And indeed, beſides what you ſay here, upon your hypotheſis, that force is lawful only becauſe it is neceſſary to bring men to ſalvation; it cannot be lawful to uſe it, to bring men to any thing, but what is abſolutely neceſſary to ſalvation. For if the lawfulneſs of force be only from the need men have of it to bring them to ſalvation, it cannot lawfully be uſed to bring men to that which they do not need, or is not neceſſary to their ſalvation; for in ſuch an application of it, it is not needful to their ſalvation. Can you therefore ſay, that there is nothing required to be believed and profeſſed in the church of England, but what lies "ſo obvious and expoſed to all "that ſincerely and diligently ſeek it, that no ſuch "perſon ſhall ever fail of attaining the knowledge of "it?" What think you of St. Athanaſius's creed? Is the ſenſe of that ſo obvious and expoſed to every one who ſeeks it; which ſo many learned men have explained ſo different ways, and which yet a great many profeſs they cannot underſtand? Or is it neceſſary to your or my ſalvation, that you or I ſhould believe and pronounce all thoſe damned who do not believe that creed, i. e. every propoſition in it? which I fear would extend to not a few of the church of England; unleſs we can think that people believe, i. e. aſſent to the truth of propoſitions, they do not at all underſtand. If ever you were acquainted with a country pariſh, you muſt needs have a ſtrange opinion of them, if you think all the plowmen and milkmaids at church underſtood all the propoſitions in Athanaſius's creed; it is more, truly, than I ſhould be apt to think of any one of them; and

and yet I cannot hence believe myſelf authorized to judge or pronounce them all damned: it is too bold an intrenching on the prerogative of the Almighty; to their own maſter they ſtand or fall.

The doctrine of original ſin, is that which is profeſſed and muſt be owned by the members of the church of England, as is evident from the XXXIX articles, and ſeveral paſſages in the liturgy: and yet I aſk you, whether this be "ſo obvious and expoſed to all that "diligently and ſincerely ſeek the truth," that one who is in the communion of the church of England, ſincerely ſeeking the truth, may not raiſe to himſelf ſuch difficulties concerning the doctrine of original ſin, as may puzzle him though he be a man of ſtudy; and whether he may not puſh his inquiries ſo far, as to be ſtaggered in his opinion?

If you grant me this, as I am apt to think you will, then I inquire whether it be not true, notwithſtanding what you ſay concerning the plainneſs and obviouſneſs of truths neceſſary to ſalvation, that a great part of mankind may not be able to diſcern between truth and falſehood, in ſeveral points, which are thought ſo far to concern their ſalvation, as to be made neceſſary parts of the national religion?

If you ſay it may be ſo, then I have nothing further to inquire; but ſhall only adviſe you not to be ſo ſevere hereafter in your cenſure of Mr. Reynolds, as you are, where you tell me, that "famous inſtance I give of the "two Reynolds's is not of any moment to prove the "contrary; unleſs I can undertake, that he that erred "was as ſincere in his inquiry after that truth, as I ſup-"poſe him able to examine and judge."

You will, I ſuppoſe, be more charitable another time, when you have conſidered, that neither ſincerity, nor freedom from errour, even in the eſtabliſhed doctrines of their own church, is the privilege of thoſe who join themſelves in outward profeſſion to any national church whatſoever. And it is not impoſſible, that one who has ſubſcribed the XXXIX articles, may yet make it a queſtion, "Whether it may be truly ſaid that God im-"putes the firſt ſin of Adam to his poſterity?" &c.

But

But we are apt to be ſo fond of our own opinions, and almoſt infallibility, that we will not allow them to be ſincere, who quit our communion; whilſt at the ſame time we tell the world, it is preſumable, that all who embrace it do it ſincerely, and upon conviction; though we cannot but know many of them to be but looſe, inconſiderate, and ignorant people. This is all the reaſon you have, when you ſpeak of the Reynolds's, to ſuſpect one of the brothers more than the other: and to think that Mr. Chillingworth had not as much ſincerity when he quitted, as when he returned to the church of England, is a partiality, which nothing can juſtify without pretending to infallibility.

To ſhow that you do not fancy your force to be uſeful, but that you "judge ſo upon juſt and ſufficient grounds, "you tell us, the ſtrong probability of its ſucceſs is "grounded upon the conſideration of human nature, "and the general temper of mankind, apt to be wrought "upon by the method you ſpeak of, and upon the in-"diſputable atteſtation of experience." The conſideration of human nature, and the general temper of mankind, will teach one this, that men are apt, in things within their power, to be wrought upon by force, and the more wrought upon, the greater the force or puniſhments are: ſo that where moderate penalties will not work, great ſeverities will. Which conſideration of human nature, if it be a juſt ground to judge any force uſeful, will I fear neceſſarily carry you, in your judgment, to ſeverities beyond the moderate penalties, ſo often mentioned in your ſyſtem, upon a ſtrong probability of the ſucceſs of greater puniſhments, where leſs would not prevail.

But if to conſider ſo as you require, i. e. ſo as to embrace, and believe, be not in their power, then no force at all, great or little, is or can be uſeful. You muſt therefore (conſider it which way you will) either renounce all force as uſeful, or pull off your maſk, and own all the ſeverities of the crueleſt perſecutors.

The other reaſon of your judging force to be uſeful, you ſay, is grounded on the indiſputable atteſtation of experience. Pray tell us where you have this atteſtation of

of experience for your moderate, which is the only useful, force: name the country where true religion or found christianity has been nationally received, and established by moderate penal laws, that the observing persons you appeal to, may know where to employ their observation: tell us how long it was tried, and what was the success of it? And where there has been the relaxation of such moderate penal laws, the fruits whereof have continually been epicurism and atheism? Till you do this, I fear, that all the world will think there is a more indisputable attestation of experience for the success of dragooning, and the severities you condemn, than of your moderate method; which we shall compare with the king of France's, and see which is most successful in making proselytes to church conformity; (for yours as well as his reach no further than that) when you produce your examples: the confident talk whereof, is good to countenance a cause, though experience there be none in the case.

But you "appeal, you say, to all observing persons, "whether wherever true religion or found christianity "have been nationally received and established by mo-"derate penal laws, it has not always visibly lost "ground by the relaxation of those laws?" True or false religions, found or unfound christianity, wherever established into national religions by penal laws, always have lost, and always will lose ground, i. e. lose several of their conforming professors upon the relaxation of those laws. But this concerns not the true, more than other religions, nor is any prejudice to it; but only shows that many are, by the penalties of the law, kept in the communion of the national religion, who are not really convinced or persuaded of it: and therefore, as soon as liberty is given, they own the dislike they had many of them before, and out of persuasion, curiosity, &c. seek out and betake themselves to some other profession. This need not startle the magistrates of any religion, much less those of the true; since they will be sure to retain those, who more mind their secular interest than the truth of religion; who are every-where the greater number, by the advantages of countenance and preferment:

ment: and if it be the true religion, they will retain thoſe alſo, who are in earneſt about it, by the ſtrong tie of conſcience and conviction.

You go on, "Whether ſects and hereſies (even the "wildeſt and moſt abſurd, and even epicuriſm and "atheiſm) have not continually thereupon ſpread themſelves, and whether the very life of chriſtianity has "not ſenſibly decayed, as well as the number of ſound "profeſſors of it been daily leſſened upon it?" As to atheiſm and epicuriſm, whether they ſpread more under toleration, or national religions, eſtabliſhed by moderate penal laws; when you ſhow us the countries where fair trial hath been made of both, that we may compare them together, we ſhall better be able to judge.

"Epicuriſm and atheiſm, ſay you, are found con-"ſtantly to ſpread themſelves upon the relaxation of "moderate penal laws." We will ſuppoſe your hiſtory to be full of inſtances of ſuch relaxations, which you will in good time communicate to the world, that wants this aſſiſtance from your obſervation. But were this to be juſtified out of hiſtory, yet would it not be any argument againſt toleration; unleſs your hiſtory can furniſh you with a new ſort of religion founded in atheiſm. However, you do well to charge the ſpreading of atheiſm upon toleration in matters of religion, as an argument againſt thoſe who deny atheiſm, which takes away all religion, to have any right to toleration at all. But perhaps, as is uſual for thoſe who think all the world ſhould ſee with their eyes, and receive their ſyſtems for unqueſtionable verities, zeal for your own way makes you call all atheiſm, that agrees not with it. That which makes me doubt of this, are theſe following words: "Not to ſpeak of what at this time "our eyes cannot but ſee, for fear of giving offence: "though I hope it will be none to any, that have a juſt "concern for truth and piety, to take notice of the "books and pamphlets which now fly ſo thick about "this kingdom, manifeſtly tending to the multiplying "of ſects and diviſions, and even to the promoting of "ſcepticiſm in religion amongſt us. In which num-"ber, you ſay, you ſhall not much need my pardon,

"if

" if you reckon the firſt and ſecond letter concerning " toleration." Wherein, by a broad inſinuation, you impute the ſpreading of atheiſm amongſt us, to the late relaxation made in favour of proteſtant diſſenters: and yet all that you can take notice of as a proof of this, is " the books and pamphlets which now fly ſo thick " about this kingdom, manifeſtly tending to the mul- " tiplying of ſects and diviſions, and even to the pro- " moting of ſcepticiſm in religion amongſt us;" and, for inſtance, you name the firſt and ſecond letter concerning toleration. If one may gueſs at the others by theſe; the atheiſm and ſcepticiſm you accuſe them of will have but little more in it, than an oppoſition to your hypotheſis; on which the whole buſineſs of religion muſt ſo turn, that whatever agrees not with your ſyſtem, muſt preſently, by interpretation, be concluded to tend to the promoting of atheiſm or ſcepticiſm in religion. For I challenge you to ſhow, in either of thoſe two letters you mention, one word tending to epicuriſm, atheiſm, or ſcepticiſm in religion.

But, ſir, againſt the next time you are to give an account of books and pamphlets tending to the promoting ſcepticiſm in religion amongſt us, I ſhall mind you of the " Third letter concerning toleration," to be added to the catalogue, which aſſerting and building upon this, that " true religion may be known by thoſe " who profeſs it to be the only true religion" does not a little towards betraying the chriſtian religion to ſceptics. For what greater advantage can be given them, than to teach, that one may know the true religion? thereby putting into their hands a right to demand it to be demonſtrated to them, that the chriſtian religion is true, and bringing on the profeſſors of it a neceſſity of doing it. I have heard it complained of as one great artifice of ſceptics, to require demonſtrations where they neither could be had, nor were neceſſary. But if the true religion may be known to men to be ſo, a ſceptic may require, and you cannot blame him if he does not receive your religion, upon the ſtrongeſt probable arguments, without demonſtration.

And

And if one ſhould demand of you demonſtration of the truths of your religion, which, I beſeech you, would you do, either renounce your aſſertion, that it may be known to be true, or elſe undertake to demonſtrate it to him?

And as for the decay of the very life and ſpirit of chriſtianity, and the ſpreading of epicuriſm amongſt us: I aſk, what can more tend to the promoting of them than this doctrine, which is to be found in the ſame letter, viz. That it is preſumable that thoſe who conform, do it upon reaſon and conviction? When you can inſtance in any thing ſo much tending to the promoting of ſcepticiſm in religion and epicuriſm, in the firſt or ſecond letter concerning toleration, we ſhall have reaſon to think you have ſome ground for what you ſay.

As to epicuriſm, the ſpreading whereof you likewiſe impute to the relaxation of your moderate penal laws; that, ſo far as it is diſtinct from atheiſm, I think regards men's lives more than their religions, i. e. ſpeculative opinions in religion and ways of worſhip, which is what we mean by religion, as concerned in toleration. And for the toleration of corrupt manners, and the debaucheries of life, neither our author nor I do plead for it; but ſay it is properly the magiſtrate's buſineſs by puniſhments to reſtrain and ſuppreſs them. I do not therefore blame your zeal againſt atheiſm and epicuriſm; but you diſcover a great zeal againſt ſomething elſe, in charging them on toleration, when it is in the magiſtrate's power to reſtrain and ſuppreſs them by more effectual laws than thoſe for church conformity. For there are thoſe who will tell you, that an outward profeſſion of the national religion, even where it is the true religion, is no more oppoſite to, or inconſiſtent with, atheiſm or epicuriſm, than the owning of another religion, eſpecially any chriſtian profeſſion, that differs from it. And therefore you in vain impute atheiſm or epicuriſm to the relaxation of penal laws, that require no more than an outward conformity to the national church.

As

As to the ſects and unchriſtian diviſions, (for other diviſions there may be without prejudice to chriſtianity,) at whoſe door they chiefly ought to be laid, I have ſhowed you elſewhere.

One thing I cannot but take notice of here, that having named "ſects, hereſies, epicuriſm, atheiſm, "and a decay of the ſpirit and life of chriſtianity," as the fruits of relaxation, for which you had the atteſtation of former experience, you add theſe words, "Not "to ſpeak of what our eyes at this time cannot but "ſee, for fear of giving offence." Whom is it, I beſeech you, you are ſo afraid of offending, if you ſhould ſpeak of the "epicuriſm, atheiſm, and decay of the "ſpirit and life of chriſtianity," amongſt us? But I ſee, he that is ſo moderate in one part of his letter, that he will not take upon him to teach law-makers and governors, even what they cannot know without being taught by him, i. e. what he calls moderate penalties or force; may yet, in another part of the ſame letter, by broad inſinuations, uſe reproaches, wherein it is a hard matter to think law-makers and governors are not meant. But whoever be meant, it is at leaſt adviſeable, in accuſations that are eaſier ſuggeſted than made out, to caſt abroad the ſlander in general, and leave others to apply it, for fear thoſe who are named, and ſo juſtly offended with a falſe imputation, ſhould be entitled to aſk, as in this caſe, how it appears, "that ſects and "hereſies have multiplied, epicuriſm and atheiſm ſpread "themſelves, and that the life and ſpirit of chriſtianity "is decayed" more within theſe two years, than it was before; and that all this miſchief is owing to the late relaxation of the penal laws againſt proteſtant diſſenters?

You go on, "And if theſe have always been the fruits "of the relaxation of moderate penal laws, made for "the preſerving and advancing true religion; you think "this conſideration alone is abundantly ſufficient to "ſhow the uſefulneſs and benefit of ſuch laws. For "if theſe evils have conſtantly ſprung from the relaxa- "tion of thoſe laws, it is evident they were prevented "before by thoſe laws." One would think by your

saying, "always been the fruits, and constantly sprung," that moderate penal laws, for preserving the true religion, had been the constant practice of all christian commonwealths; and that relaxations of them, in favour of a free toleration, had frequently happened; and that there were examples both of the one and the other, as common and known, as of princes that have persecuted for religion, and learned men who have employed their skill to make it good. But till you show us in what ages or countries your moderate establishments were in fashion, and where they were again removed to make way for our author's toleration; you to as little purpose talk of the fruits of them, as if you should talk of the fruit of a tree which no-body planted, or was no-where suffered to grow till one might see what fruit came from it.

Having laid it down as one of the conditions for a fair debate of this controversy, "That it should be without "supposing all along your church in the right, and "your religion the true;" I add these words: "Which "can no more be allowed to you IN THIS CASE, what-"ever your church or religion be, than it can be to a "papist or a lutheran, a presbyterian or an anabaptist; "nay, no more to you, than it can be allowed to a "jew or mahometan." To which you reply, "No, "Sir? Not whatever your church or religion be? That "seems somewhat hard. And you think I might have "given you some reason for what I say: for certainly "it is not so self-evident as to need no proof. But you "think it is no hard matter to guess at my reason, though "I did not think fit expressly to own it. For it is "obvious enough, there can be no other reason for this "assertion of mine, but either the equal truth, or at "least the equal certainty (or uncertainty) of all reli-"gions. For whoever considers my assertion, must see, "that to make it good I shall be obliged to maintain "one of these two things: either, 1. That no religion "is the true religion, in opposition to other religions: "which makes all religions true or false, and so either "way indifferent. Or, 2. That though some one reli-"gion be the true religion, yet no man can have any

"more

" more reaſon than another man of another religion " may have, to believe his to be the true religion. " Which makes all religions equally certain, (or un- " certain, whether I pleaſe) and ſo renders it vain and " idle to inquire after the true religion, and only a " piece of good luck if any man be of it; and ſuch " good luck as he can never know that he has, till he " come into the other world. Whether of theſe two " principles I will own, you know not. But certainly " one or other of them lies at the bottom with me, and " is the lurking ſuppoſition upon which I build all that " I ſay."

Certainly no, Sir, neither of theſe reaſons you have ſo ingenuouſly and friendly found out for me, lies at the bottom; but this, that whatever privilege or power you claim, upon your ſuppoſing yours to be the true religion, is equally due to another, who ſuppoſes his to be the true religion, upon the ſame claim: and therefore that is no more to be allowed to you than to him. For whoſe is really the true religion, yours or his, being the matter in conteſt betwixt you, your ſuppoſing can no more determine it on your ſide, than his ſuppoſing on his; unleſs you can think you have a right to judge in your own cauſe. You believe yours to be the true religion, ſo does he believe his: you ſay you are certain of it, ſo ſays he, he is: you think you have " arguments proper and ſufficient" to convince him, if he would conſider them; the ſame thinks he of his. If this claim, which is equally on both ſides, be allowed to either, without any proof; it is plain he, in whoſe favour it is allowed, is allowed to be judge in his own cauſe, which nobody can have a right to be, who is not at leaſt infallible. If you come to arguments and proofs, which you muſt do, before it can be determined whoſe is the true religion, it is plain your ſuppoſition is not allowed.

In our preſent caſe, in uſing puniſhments in religion, your ſuppoſing yours to be the true religion, gives you or your magiſtrate no more advantage over a papiſt, preſbyterian, or mahometan, or more reaſon to puniſh

either of them for his religion, than the ſame ſuppoſition in a papiſt, preſbyterian, or mahometan, gives any of them, or a magiſtrate of their religion, advantage over you, or reaſon to puniſh you for your religion: and therefore this ſuppoſition, to any purpoſe or privilege of uſing force, is no more to be allowed to you, than to any one of any other religion. This the words, IN THIS CASE, which I there uſed, would have ſatisfied any other to have been my meaning: but whether your charity made you not to take notice of them, or the joy of ſuch an advantage as this, not to underſtand them, this is certain, you were reſolved not to loſe the opportunity, ſuch a place as this afforded you, of ſhowing your gift, in commenting and gueſſing ſhrewdly at a man's reaſons, when he does not think fit expreſsly to own them himſelf.

I muſt own you are a very lucky hand at it; and as you do it here upon the ſame ground, ſo it is juſt with the ſame ſucceſs, as you in another place have exerciſed your logic on my ſaying ſomething to the ſame purpoſe, as I do here. But, Sir, if you will add but one more to your plentiful ſtock of diſtinctions, and obſerve the difference there is between the ground of any one's ſuppoſing his religion is true, and the privilege he may pretend to by ſuppoſing it true, you will never ſtumble at this again; but you will find, that though upon the former of theſe accounts, men of all religions cannot be equally allowed to ſuppoſe their religions true, yet in reference to the latter, the ſuppoſition may and ought to be allowed, or denied equally to all men. And the reaſon of it is plain, viz. becauſe the aſſurance wherewith one man ſuppoſes his religion to be true, being no more an argument of its truth to another, than vice versâ; neither of them can claim by the aſſurance, wherewith he ſuppoſes his religion the true, any prerogative or power over the other, which the other has not by the ſame title an equal claim to over him. If this will not ſerve to ſpare you the pains another time of any more ſuch reaſonings, as we have twice had on this ſubject, I think I ſhall be forced to ſend you to my mahometans or pagans: and I doubt whether I am not leſs civil

civil to your parts than I ſhould be, that I do not ſend you to them now.

You go on, and ſay, "But as unreaſonable as this "condition is, you ſee no need you have to decline it, "nor any occaſion I had to impoſe it upon you. For "certainly the making what I call your new method "conſiſtent and practicable, does no way oblige you to "ſuppoſe all along your religion the true, as I ima-"gine." And as I imagine it does: for without that ſuppoſition, I would fain have you ſhow me, how it is in any one country practicable to puniſh men to bring them to the true religion. For if you will argue for force, as neceſſary to bring men to the true religion, without ſuppoſing yours to be it; you will find yourſelf under ſome ſuch difficulty as this, that then it muſt be firſt determined, (and you will require it ſhould be) which is the true religion, before any one can have a right to uſe force to bring men to it; which, if every one did not determine for himſelf, by ſuppoſing his own the true; no-body, I think, will deſire toleration any longer than till that be ſettled.

You go on: "No, Sir, it is enough for that purpoſe "that there is one true religion, and but one." Suppoſe not the national religion eſtabliſhed by law in England to be that, and then even upon your principles of its being uſeful, and that the magiſtrate has a commiſſion to uſe force for the promoting the true religion, prove, if you pleaſe, that the magiſtrate has a power to uſe force to bring men to the national religion in England. For then you muſt prove the national religion, as eſtabliſhed by law in England, to be that one true religion, and ſo the true religion; that he rejects the true religion who diſſents from any part of it; and, ſo rejecting the true religion, cannot be ſaved. But of this more in another place.

Your other two ſuppoſitions, which you join to the foregoing, are, "That that religion may be known by "thoſe who profeſs it, to be the only true religion; and "may alſo be manifeſted to be ſuch by them to others, "ſo far at leaſt, as to oblige them to receive it, and to "leave them without excuſe, if they do not."

Theſe, you ſay, are ſuppoſitions, "enough for the

" making your method consistent and practicable." They are, I guess, more than enough, for you, upon them, to prove any national religion in the world the only true religion. And till you have proved (for you profess here to have quitted the supposition of any one's being true, as necessary to your hypothesis) some national religion to be that only true religion, I would gladly know how it is any where practicable to use force to bring men to the true religion.

You suppose " there is one true religion, and but " one." In this we are both agreed: and from hence, I think, it will follow, since whoever is of this true religion shall be saved, and without being of it no man shall be saved, that upon your second and third suppositions it will be hard to show any national religion to be this only true religion. For who is it will say, he knows, or that it is knowable, that any national religion, (wherein must be comprehended all that, by the penal laws, he is required to embrace) is that only true religion; which if men reject, they shall; and which, if they embrace, they shall not; miss salvation? Or can you undertake that any national religion in the world can be manifested to be such, i. e. in short, to contain all things necessary to salvation, and nothing but what is so? For that, and that alone, is the one only true religion, without which no-body can be saved; and which is enough for the salvation of every one who embraces it. And therefore whatever is less or more than this, is not the one only true religion; or that which there is a necessity for their salvation men should be forced to embrace.

I do not hereby deny, that there is any national religion which contains all that is necessary to salvation; for so doth the romish religion, which is not, for all that, so much as a true religion. Nor do I deny, that there are national religions that contain all things necessary to salvation, and nothing inconsistent with it, and so may be called true religions. But since they all of them join with what is necessary to salvation, a great deal that is not so, and make that as necessary to communion, as what is necessary to salvation, not suffering any one to be of their communion, without taking all together;

ther; nor to live amongſt them free from puniſhment, out of their communion; will you affirm, that any of the national religions of the world, which are impoſed by penal laws, and to which men are driven with force; can be ſaid to be that one only true religion, which if men embrace, they ſhall be ſaved; and which, if they embrace not, they ſhall be damned? And therefore your two ſuppoſitions, true or falſe, are not enough to make it practicable, upon your principles of neceſſity, to uſe force upon diſſenters from the national religion, though it contain in it nothing but truth; unleſs that which is required to communion be all neceſſary to ſalvation. For whatever is not neceſſary to ſalvation, there is no neceſſity any one ſhould embrace. So that whenever you ſpeak of the true religion, to make it to your purpoſe, you muſt ſpeak only of what is neceſſary to ſalvation; unleſs you will ſay, that in order to the ſalvation of men's ſouls, it is neceſſary to uſe force to bring them to embrace ſomething, that is not neceſſary to their ſalvation. I think that neither you, or any body elſe, will affirm, that it is neceſſary to uſe force to bring men to receive all the truths of the chriſtian religion, though they are truths God has thought fit to reveal. For then, by your own rule, you who profeſs the chriſtian religion, muſt know them all, and muſt be able to manifeſt them to others; for it is on that here you ground the neceſſity and reaſonableneſs of penalties uſed to bring men to embrace the truth. But I ſuſpect it is the good word religion, (as in other places other words) has miſled you, whilſt you content yourſelf with good ſounds, and ſome confuſed notions, that uſually accompany them, without annexing to them any preciſe determined ſignification. To convince you that it is not without ground I ſay this, I ſhall deſire you but to ſet down what you mean here by true religion; that we may know what in your ſenſe is, and what is not contained in it. Would you but do this fairly, and define your words, or uſe them in one conſtant ſettled ſenſe, I think the controverſy between you and me would be at an end, without any further trouble.

Having ſhowed of what advantage they are like to be to you for the making your method practicable; in the

next place let us conſider your ſuppoſitions themſelves. As to the firſt, "there is one true religion, and but "one," we are agreed. But what you ſay in the next place, that "that one true religion may be known by "thoſe who profeſs it," will need a little examination. As firſt, it will be neceſſary to inquire, what you mean by known; whether you mean by it knowledge properly ſo called, as contra-diſtinguiſhed to belief; or only the aſſurance of a firm belief? If the latter, I leave you your ſuppoſition to make your uſe of it: only with this deſire, that to avoid miſtakes, when you do make any uſe of it, you would call it believing. If you mean that the true religion may be known with the certainty of knowledge properly ſo called; I aſk you farther, whether that true religion be to be known by the light of nature, or needed a divine revelation to diſcover it? If you ſay, as I ſuppoſe you will, the latter; then I aſk whether the making out of that to be a divine revelation, depends not upon particular matters of fact, whereof you were no eye-witneſs; but were done many ages before you were born? and if ſo, by what principles of ſcience they can be known to any man now living?

The articles of my religion, and of a great many ſuch other ſhort-ſighted people as I am, are articles of faith, which we think there are ſo good grounds to believe, that we are perſuaded to venture our eternal happineſs on that belief: and hope to be of that number of whom our Saviour ſaid, "Bleſſed are they that have not ſeen, "and yet have believed." But we neither think that God requires, nor has given us faculties capable of knowing in this world ſeveral of thoſe truths, which are to be believed to ſalvation. If you have a religion, all whoſe general truths are either ſelf-evident, or capable of demonſtration, (for matters of fact are not capable of being any way known but to the bye-ſtanders) you will do well to let it be known, for the ending of controverſies, and baniſhing of errour, concerning any of thoſe points, out of the world. For whatever may be known, beſides matter of fact, is capable of demonſtration; and when you have demonſtrated to any one any point in religion, you ſhall have my conſent to puniſh

him

him if he do not assent to it. But yet let me tell you, there are many truths even in mathematics, the evidence whereof one man seeing, is able to demonstrate to himself, and so may know them: which evidence yet he not being able to make another see, (which is to demonstrate to him) he cannot make known to him, though his scholar be willing, and with all his power applies himself to learn it.

But granting your supposition, "that the one true "religion may be known by those who profess it to be "the only true religion;" will it follow from hence, that because it is knowable to be the true religion, therefore the magistrate who professes it actually knows it to be so? Without which knowledge, upon your principles, he cannot use force to bring men to it. But if you are but at hand to assure him which is the true religion, for which he ought to use force, he is bound to believe you; and that will do as well as if he examined and knew himself, or perhaps better. For you seem not well satisfied with what the magistrates have lately done, without your leave, concerning religion in England. And I confess the easiest way to remove all difficulties in the case, is for you to be the magistrate's infallible guide in matters of religion. And therefore you do well here also to keep to your safe style, lest if your sense were clear and determined, it might be more exposed to exceptions; and therefore you tell us the true religion may be known by those who profess it. For not saying by some of those, or by all those, the errour of what you say is not so easily observed, and requires the more trouble to come at: which I shall spare myself here, being satisfied that the magistrate, who has so full an employment of his thoughts in the cares of his government, has not an overplus of leisure to attain that knowledge which you require, and so usually contents himself with believing.

Your next supposition is, that "the one true religion "may also be manifested to be such, by them, to others; "so far, at least, as to oblige them to receive it, and "leave them without excuse if they do not." That it can be manifested to some, so as to oblige, i. e. cause them

them to receive it, is evident, becauſe it is received. But becauſe this ſeems to be ſpoken more in reference to thoſe who do not receive it, as appears by theſe following words of yours: "then it is altogether as plain, that "it may be very reaſonable and neceſſary for ſome men "to change their religion; and that it may be made "appear to them to be ſo. And then, if ſuch men "will not conſider what is offered to convince them of "the reaſonableneſs and neceſſity of doing it; it may "be very fit and reaſonable," you tell me, "for any "thing I have ſaid to the contrary, in order to the "bringing them to the conſideration, to require them, "under convenient penalties, to forſake their falſe re-"ligions, and embrace the true." You ſuppoſe the true religion may be ſo manifeſted by a man that is of it, to all men ſo far as to leave them, if they do not embrace it, without excuſe. Without excuſe, to whom I beſeech you? To God indeed, but not to the magiſtrate; who can never know whether it has been ſo manifeſted to any man, that it has been through his fault that he has not been convinced; and not through the fault of him to whom the magiſtrate committed the care of convincing him: and it is a ſufficient excuſe to the magiſtrate, for any one to ſay to him, I have not neglected to conſider the arguments that have been offered me, by thoſe whom you have employed to manifeſt it to me; but that yours is the only true religion I am not convinced. Which is ſo direct and ſufficient an excuſe to the magiſtrate, that had he an expreſs commiſſion from heaven to puniſh all thoſe who did not conſider; he could not yet juſtly puniſh any one whom he could not convince had not conſidered. But you endeavour to avoid this, by what you infer from this ſuppoſition, viz. "That then it may be very fit and reaſo-"nable, for any thing I have ſaid to the contrary, to "require men under convenient penalties to forſake "their falſe religions, to embrace the true, in order to "the bringing them to conſideration." Whether I have ſaid any thing to the contrary, or no, the readers muſt judge, and I need not repeat. But now, I ſay, it is neither juſt nor reaſonable to require men under penal-

ties,

ties, to attain one end, in order to bring them to uſe the means not neceſſary to that, but to another end. For where is it you can ſay (unleſs you will return to your old ſuppoſition, of yours being the true religion; which you ſay is not neceſſary to your method) that men are by the law "required to forſake their falſe religions, and "embrace the true?" The utmoſt is this, in all countries where the national religion is impoſed by law, men are required under the penalties of thoſe laws outwardly to conform to it; which you ſay is in order to make them conſider. So that your puniſhments are for the attaining one end, viz. Conformity, in order to make men uſe conſideration, which is a means not neceſſary to that, but another end, viz. finding out and embracing the one true religion. For however conſideration may be a neceſſary means to find and embrace the one true religion, it is not at all a neceſſary means to outward conformity in the communion of any religion.

To manifeſt the conſiſtency and practicableneſs of your method to the queſtion, what advantage would it be to the true religion, if magiſtrates did every where ſo puniſh? You anſwer, That "by the magi-"ſtrates puniſhing, if I ſpeak to the purpoſe, I muſt "mean their puniſhing men for rejecting the true reli-"gion, (ſo tendered to them, as has been ſaid) in or-"der to the bringing them to conſider and embrace it. "Now before we can ſuppoſe magiſtrates every-where "ſo to puniſh, we muſt ſuppoſe the true religion to be "every-where the national religion. And if this were "the caſe, you think it is evident enough, what advan-"tage to the true religion it would be, if magiſtrates "every-where did ſo puniſh. For then we might rea-"ſonably hope that all falſe religions would ſoon va-"niſh, and the true become once more the only religion "in the world: whereas if magiſtrates ſhould not ſo "puniſh, it were much to be feared (eſpecially conſi-"dering what has already happened) that on the con-"trary falſe religions and atheiſm, as more agreeable "to the ſoil, would daily take deeper root, and pro-"pagate themſelves, till there were no room left for

"the

" the true religion (which is but a foreign plant) in " any corner of the world."

If you can make it practicable that the magiſtrate ſhould puniſh men for rejecting the true religion, without judging which is the true religion; or if true religion could appear in perſon, take the magiſtrate's ſeat, and there judge all that rejected her; ſomething might be done. But the miſchief of it is, it is a man that muſt condemn, men muſt puniſh; and men cannot do this but by judging who is guilty of the crime which they puniſh. An oracle, or an interpreter of the law of nature, who ſpeaks as clearly, tells the magiſtrate, he may and ought to puniſh thoſe, " who reject the true religi- " on, tendered with ſufficient evidence:" the magiſtrate is ſatisfied of his authority, and believes this commiſſion to be good. Now I would know how poſſibly he can execute it, without making himſelf the judge firſt what is the true religion; unleſs the law of nature at the ſame time delivered into his hands the XXXIX articles of the one only true religion; and another book wherein all the ceremonies and outward worſhip of it are contained. But it being certain, that the law of nature has not done this; and as certain, that the articles, ceremonies, and diſcipline of this one only true religion, have been often varied in ſeveral ages and countries, ſince the magiſtrate's commiſſion by the law of nature was firſt given: there is no remedy left, but that the magiſtrate muſt judge what is the true religion, if he muſt puniſh them who reject it. Suppoſe the magiſtrate be commiſſioned to puniſh thoſe who depart from right reaſon; the magiſtrate can yet never puniſh any one, unleſs he be judge what is right reaſon; and then judging that murder, theft, adultery, narrow cart-wheels, or want of bows and arrows in a man's houſe, are againſt right reaſon, he may make laws to puniſh men guilty of thoſe, as rejecting right reaſon.

So if the magiſtrate in England or France, having a commiſſion to puniſh thoſe who reject the one only true religion, judges the religion of his national church to be it; it is poſſible for him to lay penalties on thoſe who reject it, purſuant to that commiſſion; otherwiſe, without

out judging that to be the one only true religion, it is wholly impracticable for him to punish those who embrace it not, as rejecters of the one only true religion.

To provide as good a salvo as the thing will bear, you say, in the following words, "Before we can suppose "magistrates every-where so to punish, we must sup- "pose the true religion to be every-where the national." That is true of actual punishment; but not of laying on penalties by law; for that would be to suppose the national religion makes or chooses the magistrate, and not the magistrate the national religion. But we see the contrary; for let the national religion be what it will before, the magistrate doth not always fall into it and embrace that; but if he thinks not that, but some other the true, the first opportunity he has, he changes the national religion into that which he judges the true, and then punishes the dissenters from it; where his judgment, which is the true religion, always necessarily precedes, and is that which ultimately does, and must determine who are rejecters of the true religion, and so obnoxious to punishment. This being so, I would gladly see how your method can be any way practicable to the advantage of the true religion, whereof the magistrate every-where must be judge, or else he can punish no-body at all.

You tell me that whereas I say, that to justify punishment it is requisite that it be directly useful for the procuring some greater good than that which it takes away; you "wish I had told you why it must needs be directly "useful for that purpose." However exact you may be in demanding reasons of what is said, I thought here you had no cause to complain; but you let slip out of your memory the foregoing words of this passage, which together stands thus, "Punishment is some evil, some "inconvenience, some suffering, by taking away or "abridging some good thing, which he who is punish- "ed has otherwise a right to. Now to justify the bring- "ing any such evil upon any man, two things are re- "quisite; 1. That he that does it has a commission so "to do. 2. That it be directly useful for the promoting "some greater good." It is evident by these words, that

that punishment brings direct evil upon a man, and therefore it should not be used but where it is directly useful for the procuring some greater good. In this case, the signification of the word directly, carries a manifest reason in it, to any one who understands what directly means. If the taking away any good from a man cannot be justified, but by making it a means to procure a greater; is it not plain it must be so a means as to have, in the operation of causes and effects, a natural tendency to that effect? and then it is called directly useful to such an end: and this may give you a reason, "why punishment must be directly useful for "that purpose." I know you are very tender of your indirect and at a distance usefulness of force, which I have in another place showed to be, in your way, only useful by accident; nor will the question you here subjoin, excuse it from being so, viz. "Why penalties are "not as directly useful for the bringing men to the true "religion, as the rod of correction is to drive foolish-"ness from a child, or to work wisdom in him?" Because the rod works on the will of the child, to obey the reason of the father, whilst under his tuition; and thereby makes it supple to the dictates of his own reason afterwards, and disposes him to obey the light of that, when being grown to be a man, that is to be his guide, and this is wisdom. If your penalties are so used, I have nothing to say to them.

Your way is charged to be impracticable to those ends you propose, which you endeavour to clear, p. 63. That there may be fair play on both sides, the reader shall have in the same view what we both say:

L. II. p. 125. "It remains "now to examine, whether the "author's argument will not "hold good, even against pu-"nishments in your way. For "if the magistrate's authority "be, as you here say, only to "procure all his subjects (mark "what you say, ALL HIS SUB-"JECTS,

L. III. p. 63. But how little to the purpose this request of yours is, will quickly appear. For if the magistrate provides sufficiently for the instruction of all his subjects in the true religion; and

" JECTS) the means of difco-
" vering the way of falvation,
" and to procure withal, as
" much as in him lies, that
" NONE remain ignorant of it,
" or refufe to embrace it, either
" for want of ufing thofe means,
" or by reafon of any fuch preju-
" dices as may render them inef-
" fectual. If this be the magi-
" ftrate's bufinefs, in referencer
" to ALL HIS SUBJECTS; I defire
" you, or any man elfe, to tell me
" how this can be done, by the
" application of force only to a
" part of them; unlefs you will
" ftill vainly fuppofe ignorance,
" negligence, or prejudice, only
" amongft that part which any
" where differs from the magi-
" ftrate. If thofe of the magi-
" ftrate's church may be igno-
" rant of the way of falvation;
" if it be poffible there may be
" amongft them thofe who re-
" fufe to embrace it, either for
" want of ufing thofe means,
" or by reafon of any fuch pre-
" judices as may render them
" ineffectual; what in this cafe
" becomes of the magiftrate's
" authority to procure all his
" fubjects the means of difco-
" vering the way of falvation?
" Muft thefe of his fubjects be
" neglected, and left without the
" means he has authority to
" procure them? Or muft he
" ufe force upon them too? And
" then, pray fhow me how this
" can be done. Shall the ma-
" giftrate

and then requires them all, under convenient penalties, to hearken to the teachers and miniſters of it, and to profeſs and exerciſe it with one accord, under their direction, in publick aſſemblies: is there any pretence to ſay, that in ſo doing he applies force only to a part of his ſubjects; when the law is general, and excepts none? It is true, the magiſtrate inflicts the penalties in that caſe, only upon them that break the law. But is that the thing you mean by his " applying " force only to a " part of his ſub- " jects?" Would you have him puniſh all indifferently? them that obey the law, as well as them that do not?

As to ignorance, negligence, and prejudice, I deſire you, or any man elſe, to tell me what better courſe can be taken to cure them, than that which I have mentioned. For if after

" giſtrate puniſh thoſe of his " own religion, to procure " them the means of diſcover- " ing the way of ſalvation, and " to procure, as much as in him " lies, that they remain not ig- " norant of it, or refuſe not to " embrace it? Theſe are ſuch " contradictions in practice, this " is ſuch condemnation of a " man's own religion, as no one " can expect from the magi- " ſtrate; and I dare ſay you de- " ſire not of him. And yet " this is that he muſt do, if his authority be to pro- " cure ALL his ſubjects the means of diſcovering the " way to ſalvation. And if it be ſo needful, as you ſay " it is, that he ſhould uſe it; I am ſure force cannot " do that till it be applied wider, and puniſhment be " laid upon more than you would have it. For if the " magiſtrate be by force to procure, as much as in " him lies, that NONE remain ignorant of the way " of ſalvation, muſt he not puniſh all thoſe who are " ignorant of the way of ſalvation? And pray tell " me how is this any way practicable, but by ſup- " poſing none in the national church ignorant, and all " out of it ignorant, of the way of ſalvation? Which " what is it, but to puniſh men barely for not being of " the magiſtrate's religion; the very thing you deny he " has authority to do? So that the magiſtrate having " by your own confeſſion, no authority thus to uſe " force; and it being otherways impracticable for the " procuring all his ſubjects the means of diſcovering " the way of ſalvation; there is an end of force. And " ſo force being laid aſide, either as unlawful, or im- " practicable, the author's argument holds good againſt " force, even in your way of applying it."

after all that God's miniſters and the magiſtrate can do, ſome will ſtill remain ignorant, negligent, or prejudiced; I do not take that to be any diſparagement to it: for certainly that is a very extraordinary remedy, which infallibly cures all diſeaſed perſons to whom it is applied.

The backwardneſs and luſts that hinder an impartial examination, as you deſcribe it, is general. The corruption of nature which hinders a real embracing the true

true religion, that alſo you tell us here, is univerſal, I aſk a remedy for theſe in your way. You ſay the law for conformity is general, excepts none. Very likely, none that do not conform; but puniſhes none who conforming, do neither impartially examine nor really embrace the true religion. From whence I conclude there is no corruption of nature in thoſe who are brought up or join in outward communion with the church of England. But as to ignorance, negligence, and prejudice, you ſay "you deſire me, or any man elſe, to tell what "better courſe can be taken to cure them, than that "which you have mentioned." If your church can find no better way to cure ignorance and prejudice, and the negligence that is in men to examine matters of religion, and heartily embrace the true, than what is impracticable upon conformiſts; then, of all others, conformiſts are in the moſt deplorable ſtate. But, as I remember, you have been told of a better way, which is, the diſcourſing with men ſeriouſly and friendly about matters in religion, by thoſe whoſe profeſſion is the care of ſouls; examining what they do underſtand, and where, either through lazineſs, prejudice, or difficulty, they do ſtick; and applying to their ſeveral diſeaſes proper cures; which it is as impoſſible to do by a general harangue, once or twice a week out of the pulpit, as to fit all men's feet with one ſhoe, or cure all men's ails with one, though very wholeſome, diet-drink. To be thus "inſtant in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon," ſome men have thought a better way of cure, than a deſire only to have men driven by the whip, either in your, or the magiſtrate's hand, into the ſheepfold: where when they are once, whether they underſtand, or no, their miniſter's ſermons; whether they are, or can be better for them or no; whether they are ignorant and hypocritical conformiſts, and in that way like to remain ſo, rather than to become knowing and ſincere converts; ſome biſhops have thought it not ſufficiently inquired: but this no-body is to mention, for whoever does ſo, "makes himſelf an occaſion to ſhow his good-will to "the clergy,"

This had not been said by me here, now I see how apt you are to be put out of temper with any thing of this kind, though it be in every serious man's mouth; had not you desired me to show you a better way than force, your way applied. And to use your way of arguing, since bare preaching, as now used, it is plain, will not do, there is no other means left but this to deal with the corrupt nature of conformists; for miracles are now ceased, and penalties they are free from; therefore, by your way of concluding, no other being left, this of visiting at home, conferring and instructing, and admonishing men there, and the like means, proposed by the reverend author of the Pastoral Care, is necessary; and men, whose business is the care of souls, are obliged to use it: for you "cannot prove, that it cannot do "some service," I think I need not say, "indirectly "and at a distance." And if this be proper and sufficient to bring conformists, notwithstanding the corruption of their nature, "to examine impartially, and "really embrace the truth that must save them;" it will remain to show, why it may not do as well on nonconformists, whose, I imagine, is the common corruption of nature, to bring them to examine and embrace the truth that must save them? And though it be not so extraordinary a remedy as will infallibly cure all diseased persons, to whom it is applied: yet since the corruption of nature, which is the same disease, and hinders the "impartial examination, and hearty em-"bracing the truth that must save them," is equally in both, conformists and nonconformists; it is reasonable to think it should in both have the same cure, let that be what it will.

CHAP.

CHAPTER X.

Of the neceſſity of force, in matters of religion.

YOU tell us "you do not ground the lawfulneſs of "ſuch force, as you take to be uſeful for the pro- "moting the true religion, upon the bare uſefulneſs of "ſuch force, but upon the neceſſity as well as uſeful- "neſs of it; and therefore you declare it to be no fit "means to be uſed, either for that purpoſe or any "other, where it is not neceſſary as well as uſeful."

How uſeful force in the magiſtrate's hand, for bring- ing men to the true religion, is like to be, we have ſhown in the foregoing chapter, in anſwer to what you have ſaid for it. So that it being proved not uſeful, it is impoſſible it ſhould be neceſſary. However we will examine what you ſay to prove the neceſſity of it. The foundation you build on for its neceſſity we have in your Argument conſidered, p. 10; where having at large di- lated on men's inconſiderateneſs in the choice of their religions, and their perſiſting in thoſe they have once choſen, without due examination, you conclude thus: "Now if this be the caſe, if men are ſo averſe to a due "conſideration, if they uſually take up their religion, "without examining it as they ought, what other means "is there left?" Wherein you ſuppoſe force neceſſary, inſtead of proving it to be ſo; for preaching and per- ſuaſion not prevailing upon all men, you upon your own authority think fit ſomething elſe ſhould be done; and that being reſolved, you readily pitch on force, becauſe you ſay you can find nothing elſe; which in effect is only to tell us, if the ſalvation of men's ſouls were only left to your diſcretion, how you would order the matter.

And in your anſwer to me, you very confidently tell us, "the true religion cannot prevail without the aſſiſt- "ance either of miracles, or of authority." I ſhall

here only obſerve one or two things, and then go on to examine how you make this good.

The firſt thing I ſhall obſerve is, that in your "argument conſidered," &c. you ſuppoſe force neceſſary only to maſter the averſion there is in men to conſidering and examination: and here in your anſwer to me, you make force neceſſary to conquer the averſion there is in men to embrace and obey the true religion. Which are ſo very different, that the former juſtifies the uſe of force only to make men conſider; the other juſtifies the uſe of force to make men embrace religion. If you meant the ſame thing when you writ your firſt treatiſe, it was not very ingenuous to expreſs yourſelf in ſuch words as were not proper to give your reader your true meaning; it being a far different thing to uſe force to make men conſider; which is an action in their power to do or omit; and to uſe force to make them embrace, i. e. believe any religion; which is not a thing in any one's power to do or forbear as he pleaſes. If you ſay you meant barely conſidering in your firſt paper, as the whole current of it would make one believe; then I ſee your hypotheſis may mend, as we have ſeen in other parts, and, in time, may grow to its full ſtature.

Another thing I ſhall remark to you, is, that in your firſt paper, beſides preaching and perſuaſion, and the grace of God, nothing but force was neceſſary. Here in your ſecond, it is either miracles or authority, which how you make good, we will now conſider.

You having ſaid, you had "no reaſon from any experiment to expect that the true religion ſhould be any "way the gainer by toleration," I inſtanced in the prevailing of the Goſpel, by its own beauty, force, and reaſonableneſs, in the firſt ages of chriſtianity. You reply, that it has not the ſame beauty, force, and reaſonableneſs now, that it had then, unleſs "I include miracles too, which are now ceaſed; and, as you tell us, "were not withdrawn, till by their help chriſtianity "had prevailed to be received for the religion of the empire, and to be encouraged and ſupported by the laws "of it."

If

If therefore we will believe you upon your own word, force being neceſſary, (for prove it neceſſary you never can) you have entered into the counſel of God, and tell us, when force could not be had, miracles were employed to ſupply its want: "I cannot but think, ſay you, "it is highly probable (if we may be allowed to gueſs "at the counſels of infinite wiſdom) that God was "pleaſed to continue them till then," i. e. till the laws of the empire ſupported chriſtianity, "not ſo much for "any neceſſity there was of them all that time, for the "evincing the truth of the chriſtian religion; as to "ſupply the want of the magiſtrate's aſſiſtance." You allow yourſelf to gueſs very freely, when you will make God uſe miracles to ſupply a means he no-where authorized or appointed How long miracles continued we ſhall ſee anon.

Say you, "If we may be allowed to gueſs:" this modeſty of yours where you confeſs you gueſs, is only concerning the time of the continuing of miracles; but as to their ſupplying the want of coactive force, that you are poſitive in, both here and where you tell us, "Why "penalties were not neceſſary at firſt, to make men to "give ear to the Goſpel, has already been ſhown;" and a little after, "the great and wonderful things "which were to be done for the evidencing the truth "of the goſpel, were abundantly ſufficient to procure "attention," &c. How you come to know ſo undoubtedly that miracles were made uſe of to ſupply the magiſtrate's authority, ſince God no-where tells you ſo, you would have done well to ſhow.

But in your opinion force was neceſſary, and that could not then be had, and ſo God muſt uſe miracles. For, ſay you, "Our Saviour was no magiſtrate, and "therefore could not inflict political puniſhments upon "any man; ſo much leſs could he impower his apoſtles "to do it." Could not our Saviour impower his apoſtles to denounce or inflict puniſhments on careleſs or obſtinate unbelievers, to make them hear and conſider? You pronounce very boldly methinks of Chriſt's power, and ſet very narrow limits to what at another time you would not deny to be infinite: but it was convenient here

for your preſent purpoſe, that it ſhould be ſo limited. But, they not being magiſtrates, "he could not im- "power his apoſtles to inflict political puniſhments." How is it of a ſudden, that they muſt be political puniſhments? You tell us all that is neceſſary, is to "lay "briars and thorns in men's ways, to trouble and "diſeaſe them to make them conſider." This I hope our Saviour had power to do, if he had found it neceſſary, without the aſſiſtance of the magiſtrate; he could have always done by his apoſtles and miniſters, if he had ſo thought fit, what he did once by St. Peter, have dropped thorns and briars into their very minds, that ſhould have pricked, troubled, and diſeaſed them ſufficiently. But ſometimes it is briars and thorns only that you want; ſometimes it muſt be human means; and ſometimes, as here, nothing will ſerve your turn but political puniſhments; juſt as will beſt ſuit your occaſion, in the argument you have then before you.

That the apoſtles could lay on puniſhments, as troubleſome and as great as any political ones when they were neceſſary, we ſee in Ananias and Sapphira: and he that had "all power given him in heaven and in earth," could if he had thought fit, have laid briars and thorns in the way of all that received not his doctrine.

You add, "But as he could not puniſh men to make "them hear him, ſo neither was there any need that he "ſhould. He came as a prophet ſent from God to re- "veal a new doctrine to the world; and therefore to "prove his miſſion, he was to do ſuch things as could "only be done by a divine power: and the works "which he did were abundantly ſufficient both to gain "him a hearing, and to oblige the world to receive his "doctrine." Thus the want of force and puniſhments is ſupplied. How far? ſo far as they are ſuppoſed neceſſary to gain a hearing, and ſo far as to oblige the world to receive Chriſt's doctrine; whereby, as I ſuppoſe, you mean ſufficient to lay an obligation on them to receive his doctrine, and render them inexcuſable if they did not: but that they were not ſufficient to make all that ſaw them effectually to receive and embrace the goſpel, I think is evident; and you will not I imagine

ſay,

ſay, that all who ſaw Chriſt's miracles believed on him. So that miracles were not to ſupply the want of ſuch force, as was to be continued on men to make them conſider as they ought, i. e. till they embraced the truth that muſt ſave them. For we have little reaſon to think that our Saviour, or his apoſtles, contended with their neglect or refuſal by a conſtant train of miracles, continued on to thoſe who were not wrought upon by the goſpel preached to them. St. Matthew tells us, chap. xiii. 58, that he did not many mighty works in his own country, becauſe of their unbelief; much leſs were miracles to ſupply the want of force in that uſe you make of it, where you tell us it is to puniſh the fault of not being of the true religion: for we do not find any miraculouſly puniſhed to bring them in to the goſpel. So that the want of force to either of theſe purpoſes not being ſupplied by miracles, the goſpel it is plain ſubſiſted and ſpread itſelf without force ſo made uſe of, and without miracles to ſupply the want of it; and therefore it ſo far remains true, that the goſpel having the ſame beauty, force, and reaſonableneſs now as it had at the beginning, it wants not force to ſupply the defect of miracles, to that for which miracles were no-where made uſe of. And ſo far, at leaſt, the experiment is good, and this aſſertion true, that the goſpel is able to prevail by its own light and truth, without the continuance of force on the ſame perſon, or puniſhing men for not being of the true religion.

You ſay, "Our Saviour, being no magiſtrate, could "not inflict political puniſhments; much leſs could he "impower his apoſtles to do it." I know not what need there is, that it ſhould be political; ſo there were ſo much puniſhment uſed, as you ſay is ſufficient to make men conſider, it is not neceſſary it ſhould come from this or that hand: or if there be any odds in that, we ſhould be apt to think it would come beſt, and moſt effectually, from thoſe who preached the goſpel, and could tell them it was to make them conſider; than from the magiſtrate, who neither doth, nor according to your ſcheme can, tell them it is to make them con-

ſider. And this power, you will not deny, but our Saviour could have given to the apoſtles.

But if there were ſuch abſolute need of political puniſhments, Titus or Trajan might as well have been converted as Conſtantine. For how true it is, that miracles ſupplied the want of force from thoſe days till Conſtantine's, and then ceaſed, we ſhall ſee by and by. I ſay not this to enter boldly into the counſels of God, or to take upon me to cenſure the conduct of the Almighty, or to call his providence to an account; but to anſwer your ſaying, "Our Saviour was no magiſtrate, "and therefore could not inflict political puniſhments." For he could have had both magiſtrates and political puniſhments at his ſervice, if he had thought fit; and needed not to have continued miracles longer "than "there was neceſſity for evincing the truth of the "chriſtian religion, as you imagine, to ſupply the want "of the magiſtrate's aſſiſtance, by force, which is "neceſſary."

But how come you to know that force is neceſſary? Has God revealed it in his word? no-where. Has it been revealed to you in particular? that you will not ſay. What reaſon have you for it? none at all but this, That having ſet down the grounds, upon which men take up and perſiſt in their religion, you conclude, "what means is there left but force?" Force therefore you conclude neceſſary, becauſe without any authority, but from your own imagination, you are peremptory, that other means, beſides preaching and perſuaſion, is to be uſed; and therefore it is neceſſary, becauſe you can think of no other.

When I tell you there is other means, and that by your own confeſſion the grace of God is another means, and therefore force is not neceſſary: you reply, "Though the grace of God be another means, and you "thought fit to mention it, to prevent cavils; yet it is "none of the means of which you were ſpeaking, in "the place I refer to; which any one who reads that "paragraph will find to be only human means: and "therefore though the grace of God be both a proper "and ſufficient means, and ſuch as can work by itſelf, "and

" and without which neither penalties nor any other " means can do any thing; yet it may be true how- " ever, that when admonitions and intreaties fail, there " is no human means left, but penalties, to bring pre- " judiced perſons to hear and conſider what may con- " vince them of their errours, and diſcover the truth to " them. And then penalties will be neceſſary in reſpect " to that end as an human means."

In which words, if you mean an anſwer to my argument, it is this, that force is neceſſary, becauſe to bring men into the right way there is other human means neceſſary, beſides admonitions and perſuaſions. For elſe what have we to do with human in the caſe? But it is no ſmall advantage one owes to logic, that where ſenſe and reaſon fall ſhort, a diſtinction ready at hand may eke it out. Force, when perſuaſions will not prevail, is neceſſary, ſay you, becauſe it is the only means left. When you are told it is not the only means left, and ſo cannot be neceſſary on that account: you reply, that " when admonitions and intreaties fail, there is no " human means left, but penalties, to bring prejudiced " perſons to hear and conſider what may convince them " of their errours, and diſcover the truth to them: and " then penalties will be neceſſary in reſpect to that end, " as an human means."

Suppoſe it be urged to you, when your moderate lower penalties fail, there is no human means left but dragooning and ſuch other ſeverities; which you ſay you condemn as much as I, " to bring prejudiced per- " ſons to hear and conſider what may convince them of " their errours, and diſcover the truth to them." And then dragooning, impriſonment, ſcourging, fining, &c. will be neceſſary in reſpect to that end, as a human means. What can you ſay but this? that you are impowered to judge what degrees of human means are neceſſary, but others are not. For without ſuch a confidence in your own judgment, where God has ſaid how much, nor that any force is neceſſary; I think this is as good an argument for the higheſt, as yours is for the lower penalties. When " admonitions and intreaties " will not prevail, then penalties, lower penalties, ſome

" degrees

" degrees of force will be neceſſary, ſay you, as a human " means." And when your lower penalties, your ſome degrees of force will not prevail, then higher degrees will be neceſſary, ſay I, as a human means. And my reaſon is the ſame with yours, becauſe there is no other means, i. e. human means, left. Show me how your argument concludes for lower puniſhments being neceſſary, and mine not for higher, even to dragooning, " & eris mihi magnus Apollo."

But let us apply this to your ſuccedaneum of miracles, and then it will be much more admirable. You tell us, admonitions and intreaties not prevailing to bring men into the right way, " force is neceſſary, be- " cauſe there is no other means left." To that it is ſaid, yes, there is other means left, the grace of God. Ay, but, ſay you, that will not do; becauſe you ſpeak only of human means. So that according to your way of arguing, ſome other human means is neceſſary: for you yourſelf tell us, that the means you were ſpeaking of, where you ſay, " that when admonitions and intreaties " will not do, what other means is there left but force? " were human means." Your words are, " which any " one, who reads that paragraph, will find to be only " human means." By this argument then other human means are neceſſary beſides preaching and perſuaſion, and thoſe human means you have found out to be either force or miracles: the latter are certainly notable human means. And your diſtinction of human means ſerves you to very good purpoſe, having brought miracles to be one of your human means. Preaching and admonitions, ſay you, are not ſufficient to bring men into the right way, ſomething elſe is neceſſary; yes, the grace of God; no, ſay you, that will not do, it is not human means: it is neceſſary to have other human means; therefore, in the three or four firſt centuries after chriſtianity, the inſufficiency of preaching and admonitions was made up with miracles, and thus the neceſſity of other human means is made good. But to conſider a little farther your miracles as ſupplying the want of force.

The queſtion between us here is, whether the chriſtian religion did not prevail in the firſt ages of the church,

church, by its own beauty, force, and reaſonableneſs, without the aſſiſtance of force? I ſay it did, and therefore external force is not neceſſary. To this you reply, "that it cannot prevail by its own light and ſtrength, "without the aſſiſtance either of miracles, or of autho-"rity; and therefore the chriſtian religion not being "ſtill accompanied with miracles, force is now neceſ-"ſary." So that to make your equivalent of miracles correſpond with your neceſſary means of force, you ſeem to require an actual application of miracles, or of force, to prevail with men to receive the goſpel; i. e. men could not be prevailed with to receive the goſpel without actually ſeeing of miracles. For when you tell us, that "you are ſure I cannot ſay the chriſtian reli-"gion is ſtill accompanied with miracles, as it was at "its firſt planting;" I hope you do not mean that the goſpel is not ſtill accompanied with an undoubted teſtimony that miracles were done by the firſt publiſhers of it; which was as much of miracles, as I ſuppoſe the greateſt part of thoſe had, with whom the chriſtian religion prevailed, till it was "ſupported and encouraged, "as you tell us, by the laws of the empire:" for I think you will not ſay, or if you ſhould, you could not expect to be believed, that all, or the greateſt part of thoſe, that embraced the chriſtian religion, before it was ſupported by the laws of the empire, which was not till the fourth century, had actually miracles done before them, to work upon them. And all thoſe, who were not eye-witneſſes of miracles done in their preſence, it is plain had no other miracles than we have; that is, upon report; and it is probable not ſo many, nor ſo well atteſted as we have. The greateſt part then, of thoſe who were converted, at leaſt, in ſome of thoſe ages, before chriſtianity was ſupported by the laws of the empire, I think you muſt allow, were wrought upon by bare preaching, and ſuch miracles as we ſtill have, miracles at a diſtance, related miracles. In others, and thoſe the greateſt number, prejudice was not ſo removed, that they were prevailed on to conſider, to conſider as they ought, i. e. in your language, to conſider ſo as to embrace. If they had not ſo conſidered in our days, what, according to your ſcheme, muſt have been done

to

to them, that did not consider as they ought? Force must have been applied to them. What therefore in the primitive church was to be done to them? Why! your succedaneum miracles, actual miracles, such as you deny the christian religion to be still accompanied with, must have been done in their presence, to work upon them. Will you say this was so, and make a new church-history for us, and outdo those writers who have been thought pretty liberal of miracles? If you do not, you must confess miracles supplied not the place of force; and so let fall all your fine contrivance about the necessity either of force or miracles; and perhaps you will think it at last a more becoming modesty, not to set the divine power and providence on work by rules, and for the ends of your hypothesis, without having any thing in authentic history, much less in divine and unerring revelation to justify you. But force and power, deserve something more than ordinary and allowable arts or arguments, to get and keep them: "si violandum sit jus, regnandi causa violandum est."

If the testimony of miracles having been done were sufficient to make the gospel prevail, without force, on those who were not eye-witnesses of them; we have that still, and so upon that account need not force to supply the want of it; but if truth must have either the law of the country, or actual miracles to support it; what became of it after the reign of Constantine the great, under all those emperors that were erroneous or heretical? It supported itself in Piedmont, and France, and Turky, many ages without force or miracles: and it spread itself in divers nations and kingdoms of the north and east, without any force, or other miracles than those that were done many ages before. So that I think you will, upon second thoughts, not deny, but that the true religion is able to prevail now, as it did at first, and has done since in many places, without assistance from the powers in being; by its own beauty, force, and reasonableness, whereof well-attested miracles are a part.

But the account you give us of miracles will deserve to be a little examined. We have it in these words,

"Consi-

" Conſidering that thoſe extraordinary means were not " withdrawn, till by their help chriſtianity had pre- " vailed to be received for the religion of the empire, " and to be ſupported and encouraged by the laws of " it; you cannot, you ſay, but think it highly proba- " ble, (if we may be allowed to gueſs at the counſels of " infinite wiſdom) that God was pleaſed to continue " them till then; not ſo much for any neceſſity there " was of them all that while, for the evincing the truth " of the chriſtian religion; as to ſupply the want of " the magiſtrate's aſſiſtance." Miracles then, if what you ſay be true, were continued till " chriſtianity was re- " ceived for the religion of the empire, not ſo much to " evince the truth of the chriſtian religion, as to ſup- " ply the want of the magiſtrate's aſſiſtance." But in this the learned author, whoſe teſtimony you quote, fails you. For he tells you that the chief uſe of mira- cles in the church, after the truth of the chriſtian reli- gion had been ſufficiently confirmed by them in the world, was to oppoſe the falſe and pretended miracles of heretics and heathens; and anſwerable hereunto mi- racles ceaſed and returned again, as ſuch oppoſitions made them more or leſs neceſſary. Accordingly mira- cles, which before had abated, in Trajan's and Hadrian's time, which was in the latter end of the firſt, or begin- ning of the ſecond century, did again revive to confound the magical deluſions of the heretics of that time. And in the third century the heretics uſing no ſuch tricks, and the faith being confirmed, they by degrees ceaſed, of which there then, he ſays, could be no imaginable neceſſity. His words are, " Et quidem eo minus ne- " ceſſaria ſunt pro veterum principiis recentiora illa mi- " racula, quod hæreticos, quos appellant, nullos ad- " verſarios habeant, qui contraria illis dogmata aſtruant " miraculis. Sic enim vidimus, apud veteres, dum " nulli eccleſiam exercerent adverſarii, ſeu hæretici, ſeu " Gentiles; aut ſatis illi præteritis miraculis fuiſſent re- " futati; aut nullas ipſi præſtigias opponerent quæ veris " eſſent miraculis oppugnandæ; ſubductam deinde pau- " latim eſſe mirificam illam ſpiritus virtutem. Ortos " ſub Trajano Hadrianoque hæreticos oſtendimus præ- " ſtigiis

" ſtigiis magicis fuiſſe uſos, & proinde miraculorum " verorum in eccleſia uſum una REVIXISSE. Ne dicam " præſtigiatores etiam Gentiles eodem illo ſeculo ſane " frequentiſſimos, Apuleium in Africa, in Aſia Alex- " andrum Pſeudomantim, multoſque alios quorum me- " minit Ariſtides. Tertio ſeculo orto, hæretici Her- " mogenes, Praxeas, Noetus, Theodotus, Sabellius, No- " vatianus, Artemas, Samoſatenus, nulla, ut videtur, " miracula ipſi venditabant, nullis propterea miraculis " oppugnandi. Inde vidimus, apud ipſos etiam Catho- " licos, ſenſim defeciſſe miracula. Et quidem, hære- " ticis nulla in contrarium miracula oſtentantibus, quæ " tandem fingi poteſt miraculorum neceſſitas traditam " ab initio fidem, miraculiſque adeo jamdudum confir- " matam prædicantibus? Nulla certe prorſus pro pri- " mævo miraculorum exemplo. Nulla denique con- " ſciis vere primævam eſſe fidem quam novis miraculis " ſuſcipiunt confirmandam." Dodwell, Diſſertat. in Iræn. Diſſ. II. Sect. 65.

The hiſtory therefore you have from him, of miracles, ſerves for his hypotheſis, but not at all for yours. For if they were continued to ſupply the want of force, which was to deal with the corruption of depraved human nature; that being, without any great variation in the world, conſtantly the ſame, there could be no reaſon why they ſhould abate and fail, and then return and revive again. So that there being then, as you ſuppoſe, no neceſſity of miracles for any other end, but to ſupply the want of the magiſtrate's aſſiſtance; they muſt, to ſuit that end, be conſtant and regularly the ſame as you would have force to be, which is ſteadily and uninterruptedly to be applied, as a conſtantly neceſſary remedy, to the corrupt nature of mankind.

If you allow the learned Dodwell's reaſons, for the continuation of miracles, till the fourth century, your hypotheſis, that they were continued to ſupply the magiſtrate's aſſiſtance, will be only precarious. For if there was need of miracles till that time to other purpoſes; the continuation of them in the church, though you could prove them to be as frequent and certain as thoſe of our Saviour and the apoſtles; it would not advantage

vantage your cauſe: ſince it would be no evidence, that they were uſed for that end; which as long as there were other viſible uſes of them, you could not, without revelation, aſſure us were made uſe of by divine Providence "to ſupply the want of the magiſtrate's aſſiſtance." You muſt therefore confute his hypotheſis, before you can make any advantage of what he ſays, concerning the continuation of miracles, for the eſtabliſhing of yours. For till you can ſhow, that that which he aſſigns was not the end, for which they were continued in the church; the utmoſt you can ſay, is, that it may be imagined, that one reaſon of their continuation was to ſupply the want of the magiſtrate's aſſiſtance: but what you can without proof imagine poſſible, I hope you do not expect ſhould be received as an unqueſtionable proof, that it was ſo. I can imagine it poſſible they were not continued for that end, and one imagination will be as good a proof as another.

To do your modeſty right therefore, I muſt allow, that you do faintly offer at ſome kind of reaſon, to prove that miracles were continued to ſupply the want of the magiſtrate's aſſiſtance: and ſince God has no-where declared, that it was for that end, you would perſuade us in this paragraph, that it was ſo, by two reaſons. One is, that the truth of the chriſtian religion being ſufficiently evinced by the miracles done by our Saviour and his apoſtles, and perhaps their immediate ſucceſſors; there was no other need of miracles to be continued till the fourth century; and therefore they were uſed by God to ſupply the want of the magiſtrate's aſſiſtance. This I take to be the meaning of theſe words of yours, "I cannot but think it highly probable that God was "pleaſed to continue them till then; not ſo much for "any neceſſity there was of them all that while for the "evincing the truth of the chriſtian religion, as to ſup-"ply the want of the magiſtrate's aſſiſtance." Whereby, I ſuppoſe, you do not barely intend to tell the world what is your opinion in the caſe; but uſe this as an argument, to make it probable to others, that this was the end for which miracles were continued; which at the beſt will be but a very doubtful probability to build ſuch

ſuch a bold aſſertion on, as this of yours is, viz. That " the chriſtian religion is not able to ſubſiſt and prevail " in the world, by its own light and ſtrength, without " the aſſiſtance either of force, or actual miracles." And therefore you muſt either produce a declaration from heaven that authorizes you to ſay, that miracles were uſed to ſupply the want of force; or ſhow that there was no other uſe of them but this. For if any other uſe can be aſſigned of them, as long as they continued in the church, one may ſafely deny, that they were to ſupply the want of force: and it will lie upon you to prove it by ſome other way than by ſaying you think it highly probable. For I ſuppoſe you do not expect that your thinking any thing highly probable, ſhould be a ſufficient reaſon for others to acquieſce in, when perhaps, the hiſtory of miracles conſidered, no-body could bring himſelf to ſay he thought it probable, but one whoſe hypotheſis ſtood in need of ſuch a poor ſupport.

The other reaſon you ſeem to build on is this, that when chriſtianity was received for the religion of the empire, miracles ceaſed; becauſe there was then no longer any need of them: which I take to be the argument inſinuated in theſe words, " Conſidering that thoſe " extraordinary means were not withdrawn till by their " help chriſtianity had prevailed to be received for the " religion of the empire." If then you can make it appear that miracles laſted till chriſtianity was received for the religion of the empire, without any other reaſon for their continuation, but to ſupply the want of the magiſtrate's aſſiſtance; and that they ceaſed as ſoon as the magiſtrates became chriſtians; your argument will have ſome kind of probability, that within the Roman empire this was the method God uſed for the propagating the chriſtian religion. But it will not ſerve to make good your poſition, " that the chriſtian religion cannot " ſubſiſt and prevail by its own ſtrength and light, with- " out the aſſiſtance of miracles or authority," unleſs you can ſhow, that God made uſe of miracles to introduce and ſupport it in other parts of the world, not ſubject to the roman empire, till the magiſtrates there alſo became chriſtians. For the corruption of nature being

being the ſame without, as within the bounds of the roman empire; miracles, upon your hypotheſis, were as neceſſary to ſupply the want of the magiſtrate's aſſiſtance in other countries as in the roman empire. For I do not think you will find the civil ſovereigns were the firſt converted in all thoſe countries, where the chriſtian religion was planted after Conſtantine's reign: and in all thoſe it will be neceſſary for you to ſhow us the aſſiſtance of miracles.

But let us ſee how much your hypotheſis is favoured by church-hiſtory. If the writings of the fathers of greateſt name and credit are to be believed, miracles were not withdrawn when chriſtianity had prevailed to be received for the religion of the empire. Athanaſius, the great defender of the catholic orthodoxy, writ the life of his contemporary St. Anthony, full of miracles; which though ſome have queſtioned, yet the learned Dodwell allows to be writ by Athanaſius: and the ſtyle evinces it to be his, which is alſo confirmed by other eccleſiaſtical writers.

"Palladius tells us, That Ammon did many miracles: but that particularly St. Athanaſius related in "the life of Anthony, that Ammon going with ſome "monks Anthony had ſent to him, when they came to "the river Lycus, which they were to paſs, was afraid "to ſtrip for fear of ſeeing himſelf naked; and whilſt "he was in diſpute of this matter, he was taken up, "and in an extaſy carried over by an angel, the reſt of "the monks ſwimming the river. When he came to "Anthony, Anthony told him he had ſent for him, be"cauſe God had revealed many things to him concern"ing him, and particularly his tranſlation. And when "Ammon died, in his retirement, Anthony ſaw his "ſoul carried into heaven by angels." Palladius in vita Ammonis.

"Socrates tells us, That Anthony ſaw the ſoul of "Ammon taken up by angels, as Athanaſius writes in "the life of Anthony."

And again, ſays he, "It ſeems ſuperfluous for me to "relate the many miracles Anthony did; how he fought "openly with devils, diſcovering all their tricks and

" cheats: for Athanasius bishop of Alexandria has pre-
" vented me on that subject, having writ a book par-
" ticularly of his life."

" Anthony was thought worthy of the vision of God,
" and led a life perfectly conformable to the laws of
" Christ. This, whoever reads the book, wherein is
" contained the history of his life, will easily know;
" wherein he will also see prophecy shining out: for
" he propheſied very clearly of those who were infected
" with the Arian contagion, and foretold what mischief
" from them was threatened to the churches; God truly
" revealing all these things to him, which is certainly
" the principal evidence of the catholic faith, no such
" man being to be found amongst the heretics. But
" do not take this upon my word, but read and study
" the book itself."

This account you have from St. Chrysostom *, whom Mr. Dodwell calls the contemner of fables.

St. Hierom, in his treatise " De viro perfecto," speaks of the frequency of miracles done in his time, as a thing past question: besides those, not a few which he has left upon record, in the lives of Hilarion and Paul, two monks, whose lives he has writ. And he that has a mind to see the plenty of miracles of this kind, need but read the collection of the lives of the fathers, made by Rosweydus.

Ruffin tells us, That Athanasius lodged the bones of St. John Baptist in the wall of the church, knowing by the spirit of prophecy the good they were to do to the next generation: and of what efficacy and use they were, may be concluded from the church with the golden roof, built to them soon after, in the place of the temple of Serapis.

St. Austin tells us †, " That he knew a blind man re-
" stored to sight by the bodies of the Milan martyrs,
" and some other such things; of which kind there were

---

* Chrysost. Hom 8. in Matt. ii.

† Cœcum illuminatum fuisse jam noveram. Nec ea quæ cognoscimus, enumerare possumus. Aug. Retract. lib. 1. c. 13.

" so

" ſo many done in that time, that many eſcaped his " knowledge; and thoſe which he knew, were more " than he could number." More of this you may ſee Epiſt. 137.

He further aſſures us, that by the ſingle reliques of St. Stephen " a blind woman received her ſight. Lu- " cullus was cured of an old fiſtula; Eucharius of the " ſtone; three gouty men recovered; a lad killed with " a cart-wheel going over him, reſtored to life ſafe and " ſound, as if he had received no hurt: a nun lying " at the point of death, they ſent her coat to the ſhrine, " but ſhe dying before it was brought back, was re- " ſtored to life by its being laid on her dead body. The " like happened at Hippo to the daughter of BASSUS; " and two others," whoſe names he ſets down, were by the ſame reliques raiſed from the dead.

After theſe and other particulars there ſet down, of miracles done in his time by thoſe reliques of St. Stephen, the holy father goes on thus: " what ſhall I do? " preſſed by my promiſe of diſpatching this work, I " cannot here ſet down all: and without doubt many, " when they ſhall read this, will be troubled that I have " omitted ſo many particles, which they truly know " as well as I*. For if I ſhould, paſſing by the reſt, " write only the miraculous cures which have been " wrought by this moſt glorious martyr Stephen, in the " colony of Calama, and this of ours, I ſhould fill " many books, and yet ſhould not take in all of them: " but only thoſe of which there are collections pub- " liſhed †, which are read to the people: for this I took " care ſhould be done, when I ſaw that ſigns of divine " power, like thoſe of old, were FREQUENT alſo in our " times ‡. It is not now two years ſince that ſhrine has " been at Hippo: and many of the books, which I " certainly knew to be ſo, not being publiſhed, thoſe

---

* Quæ utique mecum ſciunt.

† Libelli dati ſunt.

‡ Cum viderimus antiquis ſimilia divinarum ſigna virtutum etiam noſtris temporibus frequentari. Aug. de Civ. Dei, lib. xxii. c. 8.

" which are publiſhed concerning thoſe miraculous ope-
" rations, amounted to near fifty when I writ this. But
" at Calama, where this ſhrine was before, there are
" more publiſhed, and their number is incomparably
" greater. At Uzal alſo a colony, and near Utica, we
" know many famous things to have been done by
" the ſame martyr."

Two of thoſe books he mentions, are printed in the appendix of the tenth tome of St. Auſtin's works of Plantin's edit. One of them contains two miracles; the other, as I remember, about ſeventeen. So that at Hippo alone, in two years time, we may count, beſides thoſe omitted, there were publiſhed above 600 miracles, and, as he ſays, incomparably more at Calama: beſides what were done by other reliques of the ſame St. Stephen, in other parts of the world, which cannot be ſuppoſed to have had leſs virtue than thoſe ſent to this part of Africa. For the reliques of St. Stephen, diſcovered by the dream of a monk, were divided and ſent into diſtant countries, and there diſtributed to ſeveral churches.

Theſe may ſuffice to ſhow, that if the fathers of the church of greateſt name and authority are to be believed, miracles were not withdrawn, but continued down to the latter end of the fourth century, long after " Chriſ-
" tianity had prevailed to be received for the religion of
" the empire."

But if theſe teſtimonies of Athanaſius, Chryſoſtom, Palladius, Ruffin, St. Hierom, and St. Auſtin, will not ſerve your turn, you may find much more to this purpoſe in the ſame authors; and, if you pleaſe, you may conſult alſo St. Baſil, Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory Nyſſen, St. Ambroſe, St. Hilary, Theodoret, and others.

This being ſo, you muſt either deny the authority of theſe fathers, or grant that miracles continued in the church after " chriſtianity was received for the religion
" of the empire: and then they could not be to ſupply
" the want of the magiſtrate's aſſiſtance," unleſs they were to ſupply the want of what was not wanting; and therefore they were continued for ſome other end. Which end of the continuation of miracles, when you are ſo far

far inſtructed in as to be able to aſſure us, that it was different from that for which God made uſe of them in the ſecond and third centuries: when you are ſo far admitted into the ſecrets of divine Providence, as to be able to convince the world that the miracles between the apoſtles and Conſtantine's time, or any other period you ſhall pitch on, were to ſupply the want of the magiſtrate's aſſiſtance, and thoſe after, for ſome other purpoſe, what you ſay may deſerve to be conſidered. Until you do this, you will only ſhow the liberty you take to aſſert with great confidence, though without any ground, whatever will ſuit your ſyſtem; and that you do not ſtick to make bold with the counſels of infinite wiſdom, to make them ſubſervient to your hypotheſis.

And ſo I leave you to diſpoſe of the credit of eccleſiaſtical writers, as you ſhall think fit; and by your authority to eſtabliſh, or invalidate theirs as you pleaſe. But this, I think, is evident, that he who will build his faith or reaſonings upon miracles delivered by church-hiſtorians, will find cauſe to go no farther than the apoſtles time, or elſe not to ſtop at Conſtantine's: ſince the writers after that period, whoſe word we readily take as unqueſtionable in other things, ſpeak of miracles in their time with no leſs aſſurance, than the fathers before the fourth century; and a great part of the miracles of the ſecond and third centuries ſtand upon the credit of the writers of the fourth. So that that ſort of argument which takes and rejects the teſtimony of the ancients at pleaſure, as may beſt ſuit with it, will not have much force with thoſe who are not diſpoſed to embrace the hypotheſis, without any arguments at all.

You grant, "That the true religion has always light "and ſtrength of its own, i. e. without the aſſiſtance "of force or miracles, ſufficient to prevail with all that "conſidered it ſeriouſly, and without prejudice: that "therefore, for which the aſſiſtance of force is want-"ing, is to make men conſider ſeriouſly, and without "prejudice." Now whether the miracles that we have ſtill, miracles done by Chriſt and his apoſtles, atteſted, as they are, by undeniable hiſtory, be not fitter to deal

with men's prejudices, than force, and than force which requires nothing but outward conformity, I leave the world to judge. All the assistance the true religion needs from authority, is only a liberty for it to be truly taught; but it has seldom had that, from the powers in being, in its first entry into their dominions, since the withdrawing of miracles: and yet I desire you to tell me, into what country the gospel, accompanied, as now it is, only with past miracles, hath been brought by the preaching of men, who have laboured in it after the example of the apostles, where it did not so prevail over men's prejudices, that "as many as were ordained to "eternal life," considered and believed it. Which, as you may see, Acts xiii. 48, was all the advance it made, even when assisted with the gift of miracles: for neither then were all, or the majority wrought on to consider and embrace it.

But yet the gospel "cannot prevail by its own light "and strength;" and therefore miracles were to supply the place of force. How was force used? A law being made, there was a continued application of punishment to all those whom it brought not to embrace the doctrine proposed. Were miracles so used till force took place? For this we shall want more new church-history, and I think contrary to what we read in that part of it which is unquestionable: I mean in the Acts of the Apostles, where we shall find, that the then promulgators of the gospel, when they had preached, and done what miracles the spirit of God directed, if they prevailed not, they often left them; "Then Paul and Bar-"nabas waxed bold, and said it was necessary that the "word of God should first have been spoken to you: but "seeing you put it from you, and judge yourselves un-"worthy, we turn to the gentiles, Acts xiii. 46. They "shook off the dust of their feet against them, and "came unto Iconium, Acts xiii. 51. But when divers "were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of "that way before the multitude, he departed from "them, and separated the disciples, Acts xix. 9. Paul "was pressed in spirit, and testified to the jews that "Jesus was Christ; and when they opposed themselves,

"and

" and blaſphemed, he ſhook his raiment, and ſaid unto " them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am " clean: from henceforth I will go unto the gentiles." Acts xviii. 6. Did the chriſtian magiſtrates ever do ſo, who thought it neceſſary to ſupport the chriſtian religion by laws? Did they ever, when they had a while puniſhed thoſe whom perſuaſions and preaching had not prevailed on, give off, and leave them to themſelves, and make trial of their puniſhment upon others? Or is this your way of force and puniſhment? If it be not, yours is not what miracles came to ſupply the room of, and ſo is not neceſſary. For you tell us, they are puniſhed to make them conſider, and they can never be ſuppoſed to conſider " as they ought, whilſt they perſiſt " in rejecting;" and therefore they are juſtly puniſhed to make them ſo conſider: ſo that not ſo conſidering, being the fault for which they are puniſhed, and the amendment of that fault the end which is deſigned to be attained by puniſhing, the puniſhment muſt continue. But men were not always beat upon with miracles. To this, perhaps, you will reply, that the ſeeing of a miracle or two, or half a dozen, was ſufficient to procure a hearing; but that being puniſhed once or twice, or half a dozen times, is not; for you tell us, " the power of miracles communicated to the apoſtles, " ſerved altogether as well as puniſhment, to procure " them a hearing:" where, if you mean by hearing, only attention; who doubts but puniſhment may alſo procure that? If you mean by hearing, receiving and embracing what is propoſed; that even miracles themſelves did not effect upon all eye-witneſſes. Why then, I beſeech you, if one be to ſupply the place of the other, is one to be continued on thoſe who do reject; when the other was never long continued, nor, as I think we may ſafely ſay, often repeated to thoſe who perſiſted in their former perſuaſions?

After all therefore, may not one juſtly doubt, whether miracles ſupplied the place of puniſhment? nay, whether you yourſelf, if you be true to your own principles, can think ſo? You tell us, that not to join " themſelves to the true church, where ſufficient evi-

" dence is offered to convince men that it is ſo, is a " fault that it cannot be unjuſt to puniſh." Let me aſk you now; did the apoſtles by their preaching and miracles offer ſufficient evidence to convince men that the church of Chriſt was the true church; or, which is, in this caſe, the ſame thing, that the doctrine they preached was the true religion? If they did, were not thoſe, who perſiſted in unbelief, guilty of a fault? And if ſome of the miracles done in thoſe days, ſhould now be repeated, and yet men ſhould not embrace the doctrine, or join themſelves to the church which thoſe miracles accompanied; would you not think them guilty of a fault which the magiſtrate might juſtly, nay ought to puniſh? If you would anſwer truly and ſincerely to this queſtion, I doubt you would think your beloved puniſhments neceſſary notwithſtanding miracles, " there " being no other human means left." I do not make this judgment of you from any ill opinion I have of your good-nature; but it is conſonant to your principles: for if not profeſſing the true religion, where ſufficient evidence is offered by bare preaching, be a fault, and a fault; juſtly to be puniſhed by the magiſtrate, you will certainly think it much more his duty to puniſh a greater fault, as you muſt allow it is, to reject truth propoſed with arguments and miracles, than with bare arguments: ſince you tell us, that the magiſtrate is " obliged to procure, as much as in him lies, that every " man take care of his own ſoul, i. e. conſider as he " ought; which no man can be ſuppoſed to do, whilſt " he perſiſts in rejecting:" as you tell us, p. 24.

Miracles, ſay you, ſupplied the want of force, " till " by their help chriſtianity had prevailed to be received " for the religion of the empire." Not that the magiſtrates had not as much commiſſion then, from the law of nature, to uſe force for promoting the true religion, as ſince: but becauſe the magiſtrates then, not being of the true religion, did not afford it the aſſiſtance of their political power. If this be ſo, and there be a neceſſity either of force or miracles, will there not be the ſame reaſon for miracles ever ſince, even to this day, and ſo on to the end of the world, in all thoſe coun-

countries where the magiſtrate is not of the true religion? "Unleſs, as you urge it, you will ſay (what "without impiety cannot be ſaid) that the wiſe and be-"nign diſpoſer of all things has not furniſhed mankind "with competent means for the promoting his own ho-"nour in the world, and the good of ſouls."

But to put an end to your pretence to miracles, as ſupplying the place of force. Let me aſk you, whether, ſince the withdrawing of miracles, your moderate degree of force has been made uſe of, for the ſupport of the chriſtian religion? If not, then miracles were not made uſe of to ſupply the want of force, unleſs it were for the ſupply of ſuch force as chriſtianity never had; which is for the ſupply of juſt no force at all; or elſe for the ſupply of the ſeverities which have been in uſe amongſt chriſtians, which is worſe than none at all. Force, you ſay, is neceſſary: what force? "not fire "and ſword, not loſs of eſtates, not maiming with cor-"poral puniſhments, not ſtarving and tormenting in "noiſome priſons:" thoſe you condemn. "Not com-"pulſion: theſe ſeverities, you ſay, are apter to hin-"der, than promote the true religion; but moderate "lower penalties, tolerable inconveniencies, ſuch as "ſhould a little diſturb and diſeaſe men." This aſſiſtance not being to be had from the magiſtrates, in the firſt ages of chriſtianity, miracles, ſay you, were continued till "chriſtianity became the religion of the em-"pire, not ſo much for any neceſſity there was of them, "all that while, for the evincing the truth of the chriſ-"tian religion, as to ſupply the want of the magiſ-"trate's aſſiſtance. For the true religion not being "able to ſupport itſelf by its own light and ſtrength, "without the aſſiſtance either of miracles, or of autho-"rity," there was a neceſſity of the one or the other; and therefore, whilſt the powers in being aſſiſted not with neceſſary force, miracles ſupplied that want. Miracles then being to ſupply neceſſary force, and neceſſary force being only "lower moderate penalties, ſome "inconveniences, ſuch as only diſturb and diſeaſe a "little;" if you cannot ſhow that in all countries, where the magiſtrates have been chriſtian, they have aſſiſted

assisted with such force; it is plain that miracles supplied not the want of necessary force; unless to supply the want of your necessary force, for a time, were to supply the want of an assistance, which true religion had not upon the withdrawing of miracles; and, I think I may say, was never thought on by any authority, in any age or country, till you now, above thirteen hundred years after, made this happy discovery. Nay, sir, since the true religion, as you tell us, cannot prevail or subsist without miracles or authority, i. e. your moderate force, it must necessarily follow, that the christian religion has, in all ages and countries, been accompanied either with actual miracles, or such force: which, whether it be so or no, I leave you and all sober men to consider. When you can show, that it has been so, we shall have reason to be satisfied with your bold assertion: that the christian religion, as delivered in the New Testament, cannot "prevail by its own light and strength, without the "assistance" of your moderate penalties, or of actual miracles accompanying it. But if ever since the withdrawing of miracles in all christian countries, where force has been thought necessary by the magistrate to support the national, or, as every-where it is called, the true religion; those severities have been made use of, which you, for a good reason, "condemn, as apter to "hinder than promote the true religion;" it is plain that miracles supplied the want of such an assistance from the magistrate, as was apter to hinder, than promote the true religion. And your substituting of miracles, to supply the want of moderate force will show nothing, for your cause, but the zeal of a man so fond of force, that he will without any warrant from scripture enter into the counsels of the Almighty; and without authority from history talk of miracles, and political administrations, as may best suit his system.

To my saying, a religion that is from God, wants not the assistance of human authority to make it prevail; you answer, "This is not simply nor always true. "Indeed when God takes the matter wholly into his "own hands, as he does at his first revealing any reli-"gion, there can be no need of any assistance of human

"autho-

" authority; but when God has once ſufficiently ſet-
" tled his religion in the world, ſo that if men from
" thenceforth will do what they may and ought, in
" their ſeveral capacities, to preſerve and propagate it,
" it may ſubſiſt and prevail without that extraordinary
" aſſiſtance from him, which was neceſſary for its firſt
" eſtabliſhment." By this rule of yours, how long was there need of miracles to make chriſtianity ſubſiſt and prevail? If you will keep to it, you will find there was no need of miracles, after the promulgation of the goſpel by Chriſt and his apoſtles; for I aſk you, was it not then ſo " ſufficiently ſettled in the world, that if men " would from thenceforth have done what they might " and ought, in their ſeveral capacities," it would have ſubſiſted and prevailed without that extraordinary aſſiſtance of miracles? unleſs you will on this occaſion retract what you ſay in other places, viz. that it is a fault not to receive the " true religion, where ſufficient evi-
" dence is offered to convince men that it is ſo." If then, from the times of the apoſtles, the chriſtian religion has had ſufficient evidence that it is the true religion, and men did their duty, i. e. receive it; it would certainly have ſubſiſted and prevailed, even from the apoſtles times, without that extraordinary aſſiſtance; and then miracles after that were not neceſſary.

But perhaps you will ſay, that by men in their ſeveral capacities, you mean the magiſtrates. A pretty way of ſpeaking, proper to you alone: but, even in that ſenſe, it will not ſerve your turn. For then there will be need of miracles, not only in the time you propoſe, but in all times after. For if the magiſtrate, who is as much ſubject as other men to that corruption of human nature, by which you tell us falſe religions prevail againſt the true, ſhould not do what he may and ought, ſo as to be of the true religion, as it is the odds he will not; what then will become of the true religion, which according to you cannot ſubſiſt or prevail without either the aſſiſtance of miracles or authority? Subjects cannot have the aſſiſtance of authority, where the magiſtrate is not of the true religion; and the magiſtrate wanting the aſſiſtance of authority to bring him to the true religion,

that

that want must be still supplied with miracles, or else, according to your hypothesis, all must go to wreck; and the true religion, that cannot subsist by its own strength and light, must be lost in the world. For, I presume you are scarce yet such an adorer of the powers of the world, as to say, that magistrates are privileged from that common corruption of mankind, whose opposition to the true religion you suppose cannot be overcome, without the assistance of miracles or force. The flock will stray, unless the bell-wether conduct them right; the bell-wether himself will stray, unless the shepherd's crook and staff, which he has as much need of as any sheep of the flock, keep him right: ergo, the whole flock will stray, unless the bell-wether have that assistance which is necessary to conduct him right. The case is the same here. So that by your own rule, either there was no need of miracles to supply the want of force, after the apostles time, or there is need of them still.

But your answer, when looked into, has something in it more excellent. I say, a religion that is of God, wants not the assistance of human authority to make it prevail. You answer, "True, when God takes the matter into "his own hands. But when once he has sufficiently "settled religion, so that if men will but do what they "may and ought, it may subsist without that extraor-"dinary assistance from heaven; then he leaves it to "their care." Where you suppose, if men will do their duties in their several capacities, true religion, being once established, may subsist without miracles. And is it not as true, that if they will, in their several capacities, do what they may and ought, true religion will also subsist without force? But you are sure magistrates will do what they may and ought, to preserve and propagate the true religion, but subjects will not. If you are not, you must bethink yourself how to answer that old question.

——"Sed quis custodiet ipsos
"Custodes?"——

To my having said, that prevailing without the assistance of force, I thought was made use of as an argu-

ment for the truth of the chriſtian religion: You reply, that you hope "I am miſtaken; for ſure this is a very "bad argument, That the chriſtian religion, ſo con- "trary in the nature of it, as well to fleſh and blood, "as to the powers of darkneſs; ſhould prevail as it did, "and that not only without any aſſiſtance from autho- "rity, but even in ſpite of all the oppoſition which "authority and a wicked world, joined with thoſe in- "fernal powers, could make againſt it. This, I ac- "knowledge, has deſervedly been inſiſted upon by "chriſtians as a very good proof of their religion. "But to argue the truth of the chriſtian religion, from "its mere prevailing in the world, without any aid "from force, or the aſſiſtance of the powers in being; "as if whatever religion ſhould ſo prevail, muſt needs "be the true religion; whatever may be intended, is "really not to defend the chriſtian religion, but to be- "tray it." How you have mended the argument by putting in "mere," which is not any where uſed by me, I will not examine. The queſtion is, whether the chriſtian religion, ſuch as it was then, (for I know not any other chriſtian religion) and is ſtill, "contrary to "fleſh and blood, and to the powers of darkneſs," pre- vailed not without the aſſiſtance of human force, by thoſe aids it has ſtill? This, I think, you will not deny to be an argument uſed for its truth by chriſtians, and ſome of our church. How far any one in the uſe of this argument pleaſes or diſpleaſes you, I am not con- cerned. All the uſe I made of it was to ſhow, that it is confeſſed that the chriſtian religion did prevail, with- out that human means of the coactive power of the magiſtrate, which you affirmed to be neceſſary; and this, I think, makes good the experiment I brought. Nor will your ſeeking, your way, a refuge in miracles, help you to evade it; as I have already ſhown.

But you give a reaſon for what you ſay, in theſe fol- lowing words: "for neither does the true religion "always prevail without the aſſiſtance of the powers in "being; nor is that always the true religion, which "does ſo ſpread and prevail." Thoſe who uſe the ar- gument of its prevailing without force, for the truth

of

of the chriſtian religion, it is like will tell you, that, if it be true, as you ſay, that the chriſtian religion, which at other times does, ſometimes does not, prevail without the aſſiſtance of the powers in being; it is, becauſe when it fails, it wants the due aſſiſtance and diligence of the miniſters of it: "How ſhall they hear without a preacher?" How ſhall the goſpel be ſpread and prevail, if thoſe who take on them to be the miniſters and preachers of it, either neglect to teach it others as they ought; or confirm it not by their lives? If therefore you will make this argument of any uſe to you, you muſt ſhow, where it was, that the miniſters of the goſpel, doing their duty by the purity of their lives, and their uninterrupted labour, in being inſtant in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon, have not been able to make it prevail. An inſtance of this, it is believed you will ſcarce find: and if this be the caſe, that it fails not to prevail where thoſe, whoſe charge it is, neglect not to teach and ſpread it with that care, aſſiduity, and application which they ought; you may hereafter know where to lay the blame; not on the want of ſufficient light and ſtrength in the goſpel to prevail; (wherein methinks you make very bold with it) but on the want of what the apoſtle requires in the miniſters of it; ſome part whereof you may read in theſe words to Timothy: "But thou, O man of God, follow after righteouſneſs, "godlineſs, faith, love, patience, meekneſs: give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine: "preach the word, be inſtant in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-ſuffering and doctrine:" and more to this purpoſe in his epiſtles to Timothy and Titus.

That the chriſtian religion has prevailed, and ſupported itſelf in the world now above theſe ſixteen hundred years, you muſt grant; and that it has not been by force, is demonſtration. For wherever the chriſtian religion prevailed, it did it, as far as we know any thing of the means of its propagation and ſupport, without the help of that force, moderate force, which you ſay is alone uſeful and neceſſary. So that if the ſeverities you condemn, be as you confeſs, apter to hinder than

than promote the gospel; and it has no-where had the assistance of your moderate penalties; it must follow, that it prevailed without force, only by its own strength and light, displayed and brought home to the understandings and hearts of the people, by the preachings, intreaties, and exhortations of its ministers. This at least you must grant, that force can be by no means necessary to make the gospel prevail any-where, till the utmost has been tried that can be done by arguments and exhortations, prayers and intreaties, and all the friendly ways of persuasion.

As to the other part of your assertion, "Nor is that always the true religion that does so spread and prevail," it is like they will demand instances of you, where false religions ever prevailed against the gospel, without the assistance of force on the one side, or the betraying of it by the negligence and carelessness of its teachers on the other? So that if the gospel any-where wants the magistrate's assistance, it is only to make the ministers of it do their duty. I have heard of those, and possibly there are instances of it now wanting, who by their pious lives, peaceable and friendly carriage, and diligent application to the several conditions and capacities of their parishioners, and screening them as much as they could from the penalties of the law, have in a short time scarce left a dissenter in a parish, where, notwithstanding the force had been before used, they scarce found any other. But how far this has recommended such ministers to those who ought to encourage or follow the example, I wish you would inform yourself, and then tell me. But who sees not that a justice of peace's warrant is a shorter, and much easier way for the minister, than all this ado of instruction, debates, and particular application. Whether it be also more christian, or more effectual to make real converts, others may be apt to inquire. This, I am sure, it is not justifiable, even by your very principles, to be used till the other has been thoroughly tried.

How far our Saviour is like to approve of this method in those whom he sends; what reward he is like to bestow

beſtow on miniſters of his word, who are forward to bring their brethren under ſuch correction; thoſe who call themſelves ſucceſſors of the apoſtles, will do well to conſider from what he himſelf ſays to them, Luke xii. 42. For that that was ſpoken particularly to the apoſtles and preachers of the goſpel, is evident not only from the words themſelves, but from St. Peter's queſtion. Our Saviour having in the foregoing verſes declared in a parable the neceſſity of being watchful, St. Peter, verſe 41, aſks him, "Lord, ſpeakeſt thou this "parable unto us, or even to all?" To this demand our Saviour replies in theſe words: "Who then is that "faithful and wiſe ſteward whom his lord ſhall make ruler "over his houſhold, to give them their portion of meat "in due ſeaſon? Bleſſed is that ſervant whom the Lord, "when he cometh, ſhall find ſo doing. Of a truth, I "ſay unto you, he will make him ruler over all that he "hath. But, and if that ſervant ſay in his heart, my lord "delayeth his coming; and ſhall begin to beat the "men-ſervants, and maidens, and to eat and drink, "and to be drunken: the lord of that ſervant will come "in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour "when he is not aware; and will cut him in ſunder, "and will appoint him his portion with unbelievers; "or with hypocrites," as it is, Matt. xxiv. 51.

But if there be any thing in the argument for the truth of chriſtianity, (as God forbid there ſhould not) that it has, and conſequently can prevail without force; I think it can ſcarce be true in matter of fact, that falſe religions do alſo prevail againſt the chriſtian religion, when they come upon equal terms in competition; and as much diligence and induſtry is uſed by the teachers of it, as by ſeducers to falſe religions, the magiſtrate uſing his force on neither ſide. For if in this caſe, which is the fair trial, chriſtianity can prevail, and falſe religions too; it is poſſible contrarieties may prevail againſt one another both together. To make good therefore your aſſertion, you muſt ſhow us, where ever any other religion ſo ſpread and prevailed, as to drive chriſtianity out of any country without force, where the

the miniſters of it did their duty to teach, adorn and ſupport it.

As to the following words, "Nor is that always the "true religion which does ſo ſpread and prevail; as I "doubt not but you will acknowledge with me, when "you have but conſidered within how few generations "after the flood, the worſhip of falſe gods prevailed "againſt that which Noah profeſſed and taught his "children, which was undoubtedly the true religion, "almoſt to the utter excluſion of it, (though that at "firſt was the only religion in the world) without "any aid from force, or aſſiſtance from the powers in "being." This will need ſomething more than a negative proof, as we ſhall ſee by and by.

Where I ſay, "The inventions of men need the force "and help of men: a religion that is from God, wants "not the aſſiſtance of human authority." The firſt part of thoſe words you take no notice of; neither grant nor deny it to be ſo; though perhaps it will prove a great part of the controverſy between us.

To my queſtion, "Whether if ſuch a toleration as is "propoſed by the author of the firſt letter, were eſ-"tabliſhed in France, Spain, Italy, Portugal, &c. the "true religion would not be a gainer by it?" You anſwer, That the "true religion would be a loſer by it in "thoſe few places where it is now eſtabliſhed as the "national religion;" and particularly you name England. It is then, it ſeems, by your way of moderate force and lower penalties, that in all countries where it is national, the true religion hath prevailed and ſubſiſts. For the controverſy is between the author's univerſal toleration, and your new way of force; for greater degrees of force, you condemn as hurtful. Say then that in England, and wherever the true religion is national, it has been beholden to your force for the advantages and ſupport it has had, and I will yield you the cauſe. But of national religions, and particularly that of England, I have occaſion to ſpeak more in another place.

In the next place you anſwer, That you ſuppoſe I do not hope I ſhall perſuade the world to conſent to my

toleration. I think by your logic, a propoſition is not leſs true or falſe, becauſe the world will or will not be perſuaded to conſent to it. And therefore, though it will not conſent to a general toleration, it may nevertheleſs be true that it would be advantageous to the true religion: and if no-body muſt ſpeak truth till he thinks all the world will be perſuaded by it, you muſt have a very good opinion of your oratory, or elſe you will have a very good excuſe to turn your parſonage, when you have one, into a fine-cure. But though I have not ſo good an opinion of my gift of perſuaſion, as perhaps you have of yours; yet I think I may without any great preſumption hope, that I may as ſoon perſuade England, the world, or any government in it, to conſent to my toleration, as you perſuade it to content itſelf with moderate penalties.

You farther anſwer, If ſuch a toleration eſtabliſhed there would permit the doctrine of the church of England to be truly preached, and its worſhip ſet up in any popiſh, mahometan, or pagan country, you think true religion would be a "gainer by it, for ſome time; but "you think withal, that an univerſal toleration would "ruin it both there and every-where elſe, in the end." You grant it then poſſible, notwithſtanding the corruption of human nature, that the true religion may gain ſomewhere, and for ſome time, by toleration: it will gain under a new toleration you think, but decay under an old one; would you had told us the reaſon why you think ſo. "But you think there is great reaſon to fear, "that without God's extraordinary providence, it "would in a much ſhorter time, than any one, who does "not well conſider the matter, will imagine, be moſt "effectually extirpated by it throughout the world." If you have conſidered right, and the matter be really ſo, it is demonſtration, that the chriſtian religion, ſince Conſtantine's time, as well as the true religion before Moſes's time, muſt needs have been totally extinguiſhed out of the world, and have ſo continued, unleſs by miracle and immediate revelation reſtored. For thoſe men, i. e. the magiſtrates, upon whoſe being of the true religion, the preſervation of it, according to you, depends,

pends, living all of them under a free toleration, must needs lose the true religion effectually and speedily from among them; and, they quitting the true religion, the assistance of force, which should support it against a general defection, be utterly lost.

The princes of the world are, I suppose, as well infected with the depraved nature of man, as the rest of their brethren. These, whether a hundred or a thousand, suppose they lived together in one society, wherein with the true religion, there were a free toleration, and no coactive power of the magistrate employed about matters of religion; would the true religion be soon extirpated amongst them? If you say it would not, you must grant toleration not to be so destructive of the true religion, as you say; or you must think them of another race, than the rest of corrupt men, and free from that general taint. If you grant that the true religion would be quickly extirpated amongst them, by toleration, living together in one society; the same will happen to them, living as princes, where they are free from all coactive power of the magistrate in matters of religion, and have as large a toleration as can be imagined. Unless you will say, that depraved human nature works less in a prince than a subject; and is most tame, most mortified, where it has most liberty and temptation. Must not then, if your maxim be true, toleration quickly deprive the few orthodox princes that are in the world, (take it when you will) of the true religion; and with them take away the assistance of authority, which is necessary to support it amongst their subjects? Toleration then does not, whatever your fears are, make that woeful wreck on true religion which you talk of.

I shall give you another evidence of it, and then come to examine your great reason taken from the corruption of human nature, and the instance you so often repeat, and build so much on, the apostasy after the flood. Toleration, you say, would quickly and effectually extirpate the true religion throughout the world. What now is the means to preserve true religion in the world? If you may be believed, it is force; but not all force,

great ſeverities, fire, faggot, impriſonment, loſs of eſtate, &c. Theſe will do more harm than good; it is only lower and moderate penalties, ſome tolerable inconveniencies, can do the buſineſs. If then moderate force hath not been all along, no, nor any where, made uſe of for the preſervation of the true religion; the maintenance and ſupport of the true religion in the world, has not been owing to what you oppoſe to toleration; and ſo your argument againſt toleration is out of doors.

You give us in this and the foregoing pages the grounds of your fear; it is the corruption of human nature which oppoſes the true religion. You expreſs it thus, "Idolatry prevailing againſt it [the true religion] not "by its own light and ſtrength, for it could have no-"thing of either, but merely by the advantage it had in "the corruption and pravity of human nature, finding "out to itſelf more agreeable religions than the true. "For, ſay you, whatever hardſhips ſome falſe religions "may impoſe, it will however always be eaſier to carnal "worldly-minded men, to give even their firſt-born "for their tranſgreſſions, than to mortify their luſts "from which they ſpring; which no religion but the "true requires of them." I wonder, ſaying this, how you could any longer miſtake the magiſtrate's duty, in reference to religion, and not ſee wherein force truly can and ought to be ſerviceable to it. What you have ſaid, plainly ſhows you, that the aſſiſtance the magiſtrate's authority can give to the true religion, is in ſubduing of luſts; and its being directed againſt pride, injuſtice, rapine, luxury and debauchery, and thoſe other immoralities which come properly under his cognizance, and may be corrected by puniſhments; and not by the impoſing of creeds and ceremonies, as you tell us. Sound and decent, you might have left out, whereof their fancies, and not the law of God, will always be judge, and conſequently the rule.

The caſe between the true and falſe religions as you have ſtated it, in ſhort, ſtands thus, "True religion "has always light and ſtrength of its own, ſufficient "to prevail with all that ſeriouſly conſider it, and with-

out

" out prejudice. Idolatry or falſe religions have nothing " of light or ſtrength to prevail with." Why then does not the true religion prevail againſt the falſe, having ſo much the advantage in light and ſtrength? The counterbalance of prejudice hinders. And wherein does that conſiſt? The drunkard muſt part with his cups and companions, and the voluptuous man with his pleaſures. The proud and vain muſt lay by all exceſs in apparel, furniture, and attendance; and money (the ſupport of all theſe) muſt be got only by the ways of juſtice, honeſty, and fair induſtry: and every one muſt live peaceably, uprightly, and friendly with his neighbour. Here then the magiſtrate's aſſiſtance is wanting: here they may and ought to interpoſe their power, and by ſeverities againſt drunkenneſs, laſciviouſneſs, and all ſorts of debauchery; by a ſteady and unrelaxed puniſhment of all the ways of fraud and injuſtice; and by their adminiſtration, countenance, and example, reduce the irregularities of men's manners into order, and bring ſobriety, peaceableneſs, induſtry, and honeſty into faſhion. This is their proper buſineſs every-where; and for this they have a commiſſion from God, both by the light of nature and revelation; and by this, removing the great counterpoiſe, which lies in ſtrictneſs of life, and is ſo ſtrong a bias, with the greateſt part, againſt the true religion, they would caſt the balance on that ſide. For if men were forced by the magiſtrate to live ſober, honeſt, and ſtrict lives, whatever their religion were, would not the advantage be on the ſide of truth, when the gratifying of their luſts were not to be obtained by forſaking her? In men's lives lies the main obſtacle to right opinions in religion: and if you will not believe me, yet what a very rational man of the church of England ſays in the caſe, [Dr. Bentley, in his ſermon of the folly of atheiſm, p. 16.] will deſerve to be remembered. " Did religion beſtow heaven, without any forms " and conditions, indifferently upon all; if the crown " of life was hereditary, and free to good and bad, and " not ſettled by covenant upon the elect of God only, " ſuch as live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this " preſent world; I believe there would be no ſuch

" thing as an infidel among us. And without contro-
" verſy it is the way and means of attaining to heaven,
" that makes profane ſcoffers ſo willing to let go the ex-
" pectation of it. It is not the articles of the creed,
" but their duty to God and their neighbour, that is
" ſuch an inconſiſtent incredible legend. They will
" not practiſe the rules of religion, and therefore they
" cannot believe the " doctrines" of it." The inge-
nious author will pardon me the change of one word,
which I doubt not but ſuits his opinion, though it did
not ſo well that argument he was then on.

You grant the true religion has always light and ſtrength
to prevail; falſe religions have neither. Take away the
ſatisfaction of men's luſts, and which then, I pray, hath
the advantage? Will men, againſt the light of their rea-
ſon, do violence to their underſtandings, and forſake
truth, and ſalvation too, gratis? You tell us here,
" No religion but the true requires of men the difficult
" taſk of mortifying their luſts." This being granted
you, what ſervice will this do you to prove the neceſſity
of force to puniſh all diſſenters in England? Do none
of their religions require the mortifying of luſts as well
as yours?

And now, let us conſider your inſtance whereon you
build ſo much, that we hear of it over and over again.
For you tell us, " Idolatry prevailed, but yet not by
" the help of force, as has been ſufficiently ſhown."
And again, " That truth left to ſhift for herſelf will
" not do well enough, has been ſufficiently ſhown."
What you have done to ſhow this, is to be ſeen, where
you tell us, " Within how few generations after the flood,
" the worſhip of falſe Gods prevailed againſt the reli-
" gion which Noah profeſſed, and taught his children,
" (which was undoubtedly the true religion) almoſt to
" the utter excluſion of it, (though that at firſt was
" the only religion in the world) without any aid from
" force, or the aſſiſtance of the powers in being, for
" any thing we find in the hiſtory of thoſe times, as we
" may reaſonably believe, conſidering that it found an
" entrance into the world, and entertainment in it,
" when it could have no ſuch aid, or aſſiſtance. Of

" which

" which (beſides the corruption of human nature) you " ſuppoſe there can no other cauſe be aſſigned, or none " more probable than this, that the powers then in " being did not do what they might and ought to have " done, towards the preventing or checking that hor- " rible apoſtaſy." Here you tell us, that the " wor- " ſhip of falſe gods, within a very few generations after " the flood, prevailed againſt the true religion, almoſt " to the utter excluſion of it." This you ſay indeed, but without any proofs, and unleſs that be ſhowing, you have not, as you pretend, any way ſhown it. Out of what records, I beſeech you, have you it, that the true religion was almoſt wholly extirpated out of the world, within a few generations after the flood? The ſcripture, the largeſt hiſtory we have of thoſe times, ſays nothing of it; nor does, as I remember, mention any as guilty of idolatry, within two or three hundred years after the flood. In Canaan itſelf, I do not think that you can out of any credible hiſtory ſhow, that there was any idolatry within ten or twelve generations after Noah; much leſs that it had ſo overſpread the world, and extirpated the true religion, out of that part of it, where the ſcene lay of thoſe actions recorded in the hiſtory of the Bible. In Abraham's time, Melchiſedec who was king of Salem, was alſo the prieſt of the moſt high God. We read that God, with an immediate hand, puniſhed miraculouſly, firſt mankind, at the confuſion of Babel, and afterward Sodom, and four other cities; but in neither of theſe places is there any the leaſt mention of idolatry, by which they provoked God, and drew down vengeance on themſelves. So that truly you have ſhown nothing at all; and what the ſcripture ſhows is againſt you. For beſides, that it is plain by Melchiſedec the king of Salem, and prieſt of the moſt high God, to whom Abraham paid tithes, that all the land of Canaan was not yet overſpread with idolatry, though afterwards in the time of Joſhua, by the forfeiture was therefore made of it to the Iſraelites, one may have reaſon to ſuſpect it were more defiled with it, than any part of the world: beſides Salem, I ſay, he that reads the ſtory of Abimelech, Gen. xx, xxi, xxvi,

will have reaſon to think, that he alſo and his kingdom, though philiſtines, were not then infected with idolatry.

You think they, and almoſt all mankind were idolaters, but you may be miſtaken; and that which may ſerve to ſhow it, is the example of Elijah the prophet, who was at leaſt as infallible a gueſſer as you, and was as well inſtructed in the ſtate and hiſtory of his own country and time, as you can be in the ſtate of the whole world three or four thouſand years ago. Elijah thought that idolatry had wholly extirpated the true religion out of Iſrael, and complains thus to God: "The children "of Iſrael have forſaken thy covenant, thrown down "thy altars, and ſlain thy prophets with the ſword: "and I, even I alone, am left, and they ſeek my life, "to take it away," 1 Kings xix. 10. And he is ſo fully perſuaded of it, that he repeats it again, verſe 14; and yet God tells him, that he had there yet ſeven thouſand knees that had not bowed to Baal, ſeven thouſand that were not idolaters: though this was in the reign of Ahab, a king zealous for idolatry; and in a kingdom ſet up in an idolatrous worſhip, which had continued the national religion, eſtabliſhed and promoted by the continued ſucceſſion of ſeveral idolatrous princes. And though the national religions ſoon after the flood were falſe, which you are far enough from proving; how does it thence follow, that the true religion was near extirpated? which it muſt needs quite have been, before St. Peter's time, if there were ſo great reaſon to fear, as you tell us, that the true religion, without the aſſiſtance of force, "would in a much ſhorter time, than any one "that does not well conſider the matter would ima-"gine, be moſt effectually extirpated throughout the "world." For above two thouſand years after Noah's time, St. Peter tells us, "that in every nation, he that "feareth God, and worketh righteouſneſs, is accepted "by him," Acts x. 35. By which words, and by the occaſion on which they were ſpoken, it is manifeſt, that in countries where for two thouſand years together no force had been uſed for the ſupport of Noah's true religion, it was not yet wholly extirpated. But that you

may

may not think it was so near, that there was but one left, only Cornelius, if you will look into Acts xvii. 4, you will find a great multitude of them at Thessalonica, " And of the devout Greeks a great multitude believed, " and consorted with Paul and Silas." And again, verse 17, more of them in Athens, a city wholly given to idolatry. For that those σεβόμενοι which we translate devout, and whereof many are mentioned in the Acts, were gentiles, who worshipped the true God, and kept the precepts of Noah, Mr. Mede has abundantly proved. So that whatsoever you, " who have well considered " the matter," may imagine of the shortness of time, wherein Noah's religion would be " effectually extir- " pated throughout the world," without the assistance of force; we find it at Athens, at Philippi, at Corinth, amongst the Romans, in Antioch of Pisidia, in Thessalonica, above two thousand years after, and that not so near being extinguished, but that in some of those places the professors of it were numerous; at Thessalonica they are called a great multitude: at Antioch many: and how many of them were in other parts of the world, whereof there was no occasion to make mention in that short history of the Acts of the apostles, who knows? If they answered, in other places, to what were found in these, as what reason is there to suppose they should not? I think we may imagine them to be as many, as there were effectually of the true religion christians in Europe, a little before the reformation; notwithstanding the assistance the christian religion had from authority, after the withdrawing of miracles.

But you have a salvo, for you write warily, and endeavour to save yourself on all hands; you say, " There " is great reason to fear, that without God's EXTRAOR- " DINARY PROVIDENCE, it would in a much shorter " time, than any one, who does not well consider the " matter, would imagine, be most effectually extir- " pated by it, throughout the world." It is without doubt the providence of God which governs the affairs both of the world and his church; and to that, whether you call it ordinary or extraordinary, you may trust the preservation of his church, without the use of such means,

means, as he has no-where appointed or authorized. You fancy force neceſſary to preſerve the true religion, and hence you conclude the magiſtrate authorized, without any farther commiſſion from God, to uſe it, " if " there be no other means left:" and therefore that muſt be uſed: if religion ſhould be preſerved without it, it is by the extraordinary providence of God; where extraordinary ſignifies nothing, but begging the thing in queſtion. The true religion has been preſerved many ages, in the church, without force. Ay, ſay you, that was by the " extraordinary providence of God." His providence which over-rules all events, we eaſily grant it: but why extraordinary providence? becauſe force was neceſſary to preſerve it. And why was force neceſſary? becauſe otherwiſe, without " extraordinary pro- " vidence," it cannot be preſerved. In ſuch circles, covered under good words, but miſapplied, one might ſhow you taking many a turn in your anſwer, if it were fit to waſte other time to trace your wanderings. God has appointed preaching, teaching, perſuaſion, inſtruction, as a means to continue and propagate his true religion in the world; and if it were any where preſerved and propagated without that, we might call it his " ex- " traordinary providence;" but the means he has appointed being uſed, we may conclude, that men have done their duties, and ſo may leave it to his providence, however we will call it, to preſerve the little flock, which he bids not to fear, to the end of the world.

But let us return again to what you ſay, to make good this hypotheſis of yours, That idolatry entered firſt into the world by the contrivance, and ſpread itſelf by the endeavours of private men, without the aſſiſtance of the magiſtrates, and thoſe in power. To prove this, you tell us, " that it found entrance into the world, and " entertainment in it, when it could have no ſuch aid " or aſſiſtance." When was this, I beſeech you, that idolatry found this entrance into the world? Under what king's reign was it, that you are ſo poſitive it could have no ſuch aid or aſſiſtance? If you had named the time, the thing, though of no great moment to you, had been ſure. But now we may very juſtly queſ-

tion

tion this bare assertion of yours. For since we find, as far back as we have any history of it, that the great men of the world were always forward to set up and promote idolatry and false religions; you ought to have given us some reason why, without authority from history, you affirm that idolatry, at its entrance into the world, had not that assistance from men in power, which it never failed of afterwards. Who they were that made Israel to sin, the scripture tells us. Their kings were so zealous promoters of idolatry, that there is scarce any one of them, that has not that brand left upon him in holy writ.

One of the first false religions, whose rise and way of propagating we have an account of in sacred history, was by an ambitious usurper, who, having rebelled against his master, with a false title set up a false religion, to secure his power and dominion. Why this might not have been done before Jeroboam's days, and idols set up at other places as well as at Dan and Bethel, to serve political ends, will need some other proof, than barely saying, it could not be so at first. The devil, unless much more ignorant, was not less busy in those days to engage princes in his favour; and to weave religion into affairs of state; the better to introduce his worship, and support idolatry, by accommodating it to the ambition, vanity, or superstition, of men in power: and therefore you may as well say, that the corruption of human nature, as that the assistance of the powers in being, did not, in those days, help forward false religions; because your reading has furnished you with no particular mention of it out of history. But you need but say, that the "worship of false gods prevailed without any aid from force, or the assistance of the powers "in being, for any thing we find in the history of those "times," and then you have sufficiently shown, what? even that you have just nothing to show for your assertion.

But whatever that any thing is, which you find in history, you may meet with men, whose reading yet I will not compare with yours, who think they have found in history, that princes, and those in power, first corrupted

rupted the true religion, by ſetting up the images and ſymbols of their predeceſſors in their temples, which, by their influence, and the ready obedience of the prieſts they appointed, were in ſucceſſion of time propoſed to the people as objects of their worſhip. Thus they think they find in hiſtory that Iſis, queen of Egypt, with her counſellor Thoth, inſtituted the funeral rites of king Oſiris, by the honour done to the ſacred ox. They think they find alſo in hiſtory, that the ſame Thoth, who was alſo king of Egypt in his turn, invented the figures of the firſt Egyptian gods, Saturn, Dagon, Jupiter Hammon, and the reſt: that is, the figures of their ſtatues or idols; and that he inſtituted the worſhip and ſacrifices of theſe gods: and his inſtitutions were ſo well aſſiſted by thoſe in authority, and obſerved by the prieſts they ſet up, that the worſhip of thoſe gods ſoon became the religion of that, and a pattern to other nations. And here we may perhaps, with good reaſon, place the riſe and original of idolatry after the flood, there being nothing of this kind more ancient. So ready was the ambition, vanity, or ſuperſtition of princes, to introduce their predeceſſors into the divine worſhip of the people; to ſecure to themſelves the greater veneration from their ſubjects, as deſcended from the gods; or to erect ſuch a worſhip, and ſuch a prieſthood, as might awe the blinded and ſeduced people into that obedience they deſired. Thus Ham, by the authority of his ſucceſſors, the rulers of Egypt, is firſt brought for the honour of his name and memory into their temples; and never left, till he is erected into a god, and made Jupiter Hammon, &c. which faſhion took afterwards with the princes of other countries.

Was not the great god of the eaſtern nations, Baal, or Jupiter Belus, one of the firſt kings of Aſſyria? And which, I pray, is the more likely, that courts, by their inſtruments the prieſts, ſhould thus advance the honour of kings amongſt the people for the ends of ambition and power; or the people find out theſe refined ways of doing it, and introduce them into courts for the enſlaving themſelves? What idolatry does your hiſtory tell you of among the Greeks, before Phoroneus and Danaus

naus kings of the Argives, and Cecrops and Theſeus kings of Attica, and Cadmus king of Thebes, introduced it? An art of rule it is probable they borrowed from the Egyptians. So that if you had not vouched the ſilence of hiſtory, without conſulting it, you would poſſibly have found, that in the firſt ages princes, by their influence and aid; by the help and artifice of the prieſts they employed; their fables of their gods, their myſteries and oracles, and all the aſſiſtance they could give it by their authority; did ſo much againſt the truth, before direct force was grown into faſhion, and appeared openly; that there would be little reaſon of putting the guard and propagation of the true religion into their hands now, and arming them with force to promote it.

That this was the original of idolatry in the world, and that it was borrowed by other magiſtrates from the Egyptians, is farther evident, in that this worſhip was ſettled in Egypt, and grown the national religion there, before the gods of Greece and ſeveral other idolatrous countries were born. For though they took their pattern of deifying their deceaſed princes from the Egyptians, and kept, as near as they could, to the number and genealogies of the Egyptian gods; yet they took the names ſtill of ſome great men of their own, which they accommodated to the mythology of the Egyptians. Thus, by the aſſiſtance of the powers in being, idolatry entered into the world after the flood. Whereof, if there were not ſo clear footſteps in hiſtory, why yet ſhould you not imagine princes and magiſtrates, engaged in falſe religions, as ready to employ their power for the maintaining and promoting their falſe religions in thoſe days, as we find them now? And therefore, what you ſay in the next words, of the entrance of idolatry into the world, and the entertainment it found in it, will not paſs for ſo very evident, without proof; though you tell us ever ſo confidently, that you "ſuppoſe, beſides the "corruption of human nature, there can no other cauſe "be aſſigned of it, or none more probable than this, "that the powers then in being did not what they might "and ought to have done," i. e. if you mean it to your purpoſe, uſe force your way, to make men conſider;

or

or to " impoſe creeds and ways of worſhip, towards the " preventing that horrible apoſtaſy."

I grant that the entrance and growth of idolatry might be owing to the negligence of the powers in being, in that they did not do what they might and ought to have done, in uſing their authority to ſuppreſs the enormities of men's manners, and correct the irregularity of their lives. But this was not all the aſſiſtance they gave to that horrible apoſtaſy: they were, as far as hiſtory gives us any light, the promoters of it, and leaders in it; and did what they ought not to have done, by ſetting up falſe religions, and uſing their authority to eſtabliſh them, to ſerve their corrupt and ambitious deſigns.

National religions, eſtabliſhed by authority, and enforced by the powers in being, we hear of every-where, as far back as we have any account of the riſe and growth of the religions of the world. Show me any place, within thoſe few generations, wherein you ſay the apoſtaſy prevailed after the flood, where the magiſtrates being of the true religion, the ſubjects by the liberty of a toleration were led into falſe religions; and then you will produce ſomething againſt liberty of conſcience. But to talk of that great apoſtaſy, as wholly owing to toleration, when you cannot produce one inſtance of toleration then in the world, is to ſay what you pleaſe.

That the majority of mankind were then, and always have been, by the corruption and pravity of human nature, led away, and kept from embracing the true religion, is paſt doubt. But whether this be owing to toleration, in matters of religion, is the queſtion. David deſcribes an horrible corruption and apoſtaſy in his time, ſo as to ſay, " There is none that doeth good, no not " one," Pſal. xiv. and yet I do not think you will ſay a toleration then in that kingdom was the cauſe of it. If the greateſt part cannot be ill without a toleration, I am afraid you muſt be fain to find out a toleration in every country, and in all ages of the world. For I think it is true, of all times and places, that the broad way, that leadeth to deſtruction, has had moſt travellers. I would be glad to know where it was that force,

your

your way applied, i. e. with punishments only upon nonconformists; ever prevailed to bring the greater number into the narrow way, that leads unto life; which our Saviour tells us, there are few that find.

The corruption of human nature, you say, opposes the true religion. I grant it you. There was also, say you, an horrible apostasy after the flood; let this also be granted you: and yet from hence it will not follow, that the true religion cannot subsist and prevail in the world without the assistance of force, your way applied; till you have shown, that the false religions, which were the inventions of men, grew up under toleration, and not by the encouragement and assistance of the powers in being.

How near soever therefore the true religion was to be extinguished within a few generations after the flood; (which whether more in danger then, than in most ages since, is more than you can show:) This will be still the question, whether the liberty of toleration, or the authority of the powers in being, contributed most to it? And whether there can be no other, nor more probable cause assigned, than the want of force your way applied, I shall leave the reader to judge. This I am sure, whatever causes any one else shall assign, are as well proved as yours, if they offer them only as their conjectures.

Not but that I think men could run into false and foolish ways of worship, without the instigation or assistance of human authority; but the powers of the world, as far as we have any history, having been always forward enough; (true religion as little serving princes as private men's lusts) to take up wrong religions, and as forward to employ their authority to impose the religion, good or bad, which they had once taken up; I can see no reason why the not using of force, by the princes of the world, should be assigned as the sole, or so much as the most probable cause of propagating the false religions of the world, or extirpating the true; or how you can so positively say, idolatry prevailed without any assistance from the powers in being.

Since therefore hiſtory leads us to the magiſtrates, as the authors and promoters of idolatry in the world; to which we may ſuppoſe their not ſuppreſſing of vice, joined as another cauſe of the ſpreading of falſe religions; you were beſt conſider, whether you can ſtill ſuppoſe there can no other cauſe be aſſigned of the prevailing of the worſhip of falſe gods, but the magiſtrate's not interpoſing his authority in matters of religion. For that that cannot with any probability at all be aſſigned as any cauſe, I ſhall give you this farther reaſon. You impute the prevailing of falſe religions to "the "corruption and pravity of human nature, left to itſelf, "unbridled by authority." Now if force your way applied, does not at all bridle the corruption and pravity of human nature; the magiſtrate's not ſo interpoſing his authority, cannot be aſſigned as any cauſe at all of that apoſtaſy. So that let that apoſtaſy have what riſe, and ſpread as far as you pleaſe, it will not make one jot for force, your way applied; or ſhow that that can receive any aſſiſtance your way from authority. For your uſe of authority and force, being only to bring men to an outward conformity to the national religion, it leaves the corruption and pravity of human nature as unbridled as before, as I have ſhown elſewhere.

You tell us, "that it is not true, that the true reli- "gion will prevail by its own light and ſtrength, with- "out miracles, or the aſſiſtance of the powers in being, "becauſe of the corruption of human nature." And for this you give us an inſtance in the apoſtaſy preſently after the flood. And you tell us, that without the aſſiſtance of force it would preſently be extirpated out of the world. If the corruption of human nature be ſo univerſal, and ſo ſtrong, that, without the help of force the true religion is too weak to ſtand it, and cannot at all prevail, without miracles or force; how come men ever to be converted, in countries where the national religion is falſe? If you ſay by extraordinary providence; what that amounts to, has been ſhown. If you ſay this corruption is ſo potent in all men, as to oppoſe and prevail againſt the goſpel, not aſſiſted by force or miracles; that is not true. If in moſt men; ſo it is ſtill, even where force

force is uſed. For I deſire you to name me a country, where the greateſt part are really and truly chriſtians, ſuch as you confidently believe Chriſt, at the laſt day, will own to be ſo. In England having, as you do, excluded all the diſſenters; (or elſe why would you have them puniſhed, to bring them to embrace the true religion?) you muſt, I fear, allow yourſelf a great latitude in thinking, if you think that the corruption of human nature does not ſo far prevail, even amongſt conformiſts, as to make the ignorance, and lives, of great numbers amongſt them, ſuch as ſuits not at all with the ſpirit of true chriſtianity. How great their ignorance may be, in the more ſpiritual and elevated parts of the chriſtian religion, may be gueſſed, by what the reverend biſhop, before cited, ſays of it, in reference to a rite of the church, the moſt eaſy and obvious to be inſtructed in, and underſtood. His words are, "In the common "management of that holy rite [confirmation] it is "but too viſible, that of thoſe multitudes that croud "to it, the far greater part come merely as if they "were to receive the biſhop's bleſſing, without any "ſenſe of the vow made by them, and of their renew-"ing their baptiſmal engagements in it," Paſt. Care, p. 189. And if Origen were now alive, might he not find many in our church, to whom theſe words of his might be applied, "Whoſe faith ſignifies only thus much, and "goes no farther than this, viz. that they come duly to "the church, and bow their heads to the prieſt," &c. Hom. in Joſ. IX. For it ſeem it was then the faſhion to bow to the prieſt as it is now to the altar. If therefore you ſay force is neceſſary, becauſe without it no men will ſo conſider as to embrace the true religion, for the ſalvation of their ſouls; that I think is manifeſtly falſe. If you ſay it is neceſſary to uſe ſuch means as will make the greateſt part ſo embrace it; you muſt uſe ſome other means than force, your way applied; for that does not ſo far work on the majority. If you ſay it is neceſſary, becauſe poſſibly it may work on ſome, which bare preaching and perſuaſion will not; I anſwer, if poſſibly your moderate puniſhments may work on ſome, and therefore they are neceſſary; it is as poſſible, that greater

punishments may work on others, and therefore they are necessary, and so on to the utmost severities.

That the corruption of human nature is every-where spread, and that it works powerfully in the children of disobedience, "who receive not the love of the truth, "but have pleasure in unrighteousness;" and therefore God gives them up to believe a lye; no-body, I think, will deny. But that this corruption of human nature works equally in all men, or in all ages; and so, that God will, or ever did, give up all men, not restrained by force, your way modified and applied, to believe a lye, (as all false religions are) that I yet see no reason to grant. Nor will this instance of Noah's religion, you so much rely on, ever persuade, till you have proved, that from those eight men which brought the true religion with them into the new world, there were not eight thousand, or eighty thousand, which retained it in the world in the worst times of the apostasy. And secondly, till you have proved that the false religions of the world prevailed, without any aid from force, or the assistance of the powers in being. And thirdly, that the decay of the true religion was for want of force, your moderate force; neither of which you have at all proved, as I think it manifest.

One consideration more touching Noah, and his religion, give me leave to suggest, and that is, if force were so necessary for the support of true religion, as you make it; it is strange, God, who gave him precepts about other things, should never reveal this to him, nor any-body else, that I know. To this you, who have confessed the "Scripture not to have given the magis-"trate this commission," must say, that it is plain enough in the commission that he has from the law of nature, and so needed not any revelation, to instruct the magistrate in the right he has to use force. I confess the magistrates have used force in matters of religion, and have been as confidently and constantly put upon it by their priests, as if they had as clear a commission from heaven, as St. Peter had to preach the gospel to the gentiles. But yet it is plain, notwithstanding that commission from the law of nature, there needs

some

ſome farther inſtruction from revelation; ſince it does not appear, that they have found out the right uſe of force, ſuch as the true religion requires for its preſervation; and though you have, after ſeveral thouſands of years, at laſt diſcovered it; yet it is very imperfectly; you not being able to tell, if a law were now to be made againſt thoſe who have not conſidered as they ought, what are thoſe moderate penalties which are to be employed againſt them; though yet without that all the reſt ſignifies nothing. But however doubtful you are in this, I am glad to find you ſo direct, in putting men's rejecting the true religion, upon the difficulty they have to "mortify their luſts, which the true reli-"gion requires of them," and I deſire you to remember it in other places, where I have occaſion to mind you of it.

To conclude, That we may ſee the great advantage your cauſe will receive from that inſtance, you ſo much rely on, of the apoſtaſy after the flood, I ſhall oppoſe another to it. You ſay, that "idolatry prevailed in the "world in a few generations, almoſt to the utter exclu-"ſion of the true religion, without any aid from force, "or aſſiſtance of the powers in being, by reaſon of "toleration." And therefore you think there is great reaſon to fear, that "the true religion would by toler-"ation, quickly be moſt effectually extirpated through-"out the world:" And I ſay, that after chriſtianity was received for the religion of the empire, and whilſt political laws, and force, interpoſed in it, an horrible apoſtaſy prevailed, to almoſt the utter excluſion of true religion, and a general introducing of idolatry. And therefore I think there is great reaſon to fear more harm than good, from the uſe of force in religion.

This I think as good an argument againſt, as yours for, force, and ſomething better; ſince what you build on is only preſumed by you, not proved from hiſtory: whereas the matter of fact here is well known; nor will you deny it, when you conſider the ſtate of religion in chriſtendom under the aſſiſtance of that force, which you tell us ſucceeded and ſupplied the place of withdrawn miracles, which in your opinion are ſo neceſſary

in the abſence of force, that you make that the reaſon of their continuance; and tell us, they "were continued "till force could be had; not ſo much for evincing "the truth of the chriſtian religion, as to ſupply the "want of the magiſtrate's aſſiſtance." So that whenever force failed, there according to your hypotheſis are miracles to ſupply its want; for, without one of them, the true religion, if we may believe you, will ſoon be utterly extirpated; and what force, in the abſence of miracles, produced in chriſtendom ſeveral ages before the reformation, is ſo well known, that it will be hard to find what ſervice your way of arguing will do any but the romiſh religion.

But to take your argument in its full latitude, you ſay, but you ſay it without book, that there was once a toleration in the world to the almoſt utter extirpation of the true religion; and I ſay to you, that as far as records authorize either opinion, we may ſay force has been always uſed in matters of religion, to the great prejudice of the true religion, and the profeſſors of it. And there not being an age wherein you can ſhow me, upon a fair trial of an eſtabliſhed national toleration, that the true religion was extirpated, or endangered, ſo much as you pretend by it: (whereas there is no age, whereof we have ſufficient hiſtory to judge of this matter, wherein it will not be eaſy to find that the true religion, and its followers, ſuffered by force) you will in vain endeavour, by inſtances, to prove the ill effects, or uſeleſſneſs of toleration, ſuch as the author propoſed; which I challenge you to ſhow me was ever ſet up in the world, or that the true religion ſuffered by it; and it is to the want of it, and the reſtraints and diſadvantages the true religion has laboured under, its ſo little ſpreading in the world will juſtly be imputed: until, from better experiments, you have ſomething to ſay againſt it.

Our Saviour has promiſed that he will build his church on this fundamental truth, that he is "Chriſt "the ſon of God; ſo that the gates of hell ſhall not "prevail againſt it:" and this I believe, though you tell us the true religion is not able to ſubſiſt without the

aſſiſtance

aſſiſtance of force, when miracles ceaſe. I do not remember that our Saviour any where promiſes any other aſſiſtance but that of his Spirit; or gives his little flock any encouragement to expect much countenance or help from the great men of the world; or the coercive power of the magiſtrates; nor any where authorizes them to uſe it for the ſupport of his church; "not many wiſe "men after the fleſh, not many mighty, not many "noble," 1 Cor. i. 26, is the ſtyle of the goſpel; and I believe will be found to belong to all ages of the church militant, paſt and to come, as well as to the firſt: for God, as St. Paul tells us, has choſen the "fooliſh "things of the world to confound the wiſe, and the "weak things of the world to confound the mighty;" and this not only till miracles ceaſed, but ever ſince. "To be hated for Chriſt's name ſake, and by much "tribulation to enter into the kingdom of heaven," has been the general and conſtant lot of the people of God, as well as it ſeems to be the current ſtrain of the New Teſtament; which promiſes nothing of ſecular power or greatneſs; ſays nothing of "kings being nurſ-"ing fathers, or queens nurſing mothers:" which prophecy, whatever meaning it have, it is like our Saviour would not have omitted to ſupport his church with ſome hopes and aſſurance of ſuch aſſiſtance, if it were to have any accompliſhment before his ſecond coming; when Iſrael ſhall come in again, and with the gentiles make up the fulneſs of his glorious kingdom. But the tenour of the New Teſtament is, "All that will live godly in "Jeſus Chriſt, ſhall ſuffer perſecution," 2 Tim. iii. 12.

In your "Argument conſidered," you tell us, "that "no man can fail of finding the way of ſalvation that "ſeeks it as he ought." In my anſwer, I take notice to you, that the places of ſcripture you cite to prove it, point out this way of ſeeking as we ought, to be a good life: as particularly that of St. John, "If "any one will do his will, he ſhall know of the doc-"trine whether it be of God:" upon which I uſe theſe words: "So that theſe places, if they prove what "you cite them for, that no man can fail of find-"ing the way of ſalvation, who ſeeks it as he ought;

" they do alſo prove, that a good life is the only way " to ſeek as we ought; and that therefore the magiſ- " trates, if they would put men upon ſeeking the way " of ſalvation as they ought, ſhould by their laws and " penalties force them to a good life; a good conver- " ſation being the ſureſt and readieſt way to a right un- " derſtanding. And that if magiſtrates will ſeverely " and impartially ſet themſelves againſt vice, in whom- " ſoever it is found, true religion will be ſpread wider— " than ever hitherto it has been by the impoſition of " creeds and ceremonies." To this you reply, " Whe- " ther the magiſtrates ſetting themſelves ſeverely and " impartially againſt what you ſuppoſe I call vice; or " the impoſition of ſound creeds and decent ceremo- " nies; does more conduce to the ſpreading the true " religion, and rendering it fruitful in the lives of its " profeſſors, we need not examine; you confeſs, you " think both together do beſt; and this, you think, " is as much as needs be ſaid to that paragraph." If it had been put to you, whether a good living, or a good prebend, would more conduce to the enlarging your fortune, I think it would be allowed you as no improper or unlikely anſwer, what you ſay here, " I think both together would do beſt;" but here the caſe is otherwiſe: your thinking determines not the point: and other people of equal authority may, and I will anſwer for it, do think otherwiſe: but be- cauſe I pretend to no authority, I will give you a reaſon, why your thinking is inſufficient. You tell us, that " force is not a fit means, where it is not neceſſary " as well as uſeful;" and you prove it to be neceſſary, becauſe there is no other means left. Now if the ſeve- rity of the magiſtrate, againſt what I call vice, will, as you will not deny, promote a good life, and that be the right way to ſeek the truths of religion; here is another means beſides impoſing of creeds and ceremonies, to promote the true religion; and therefore your argu- ment for its neceſſity, becauſe of no other means left, being gone, you cannot ſay " both together are beſt," when one of them being not neceſſary, is therefore, by your own confeſſion, not to be uſed.

I having

I having ſaid, That if ſuch an indirect and at a diſtance uſefulneſs were ſufficient to juſtify the uſe of force, the magiſtrate might make his ſubjects eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven: you reply, that you "ſuppoſe I "will not ſay caſtration is neceſſary, becauſe you hope "I acknowledge, that marriage, and that grace which "God denies to none, who ſeriouſly aſk it, are ſuffi-"cient for that purpoſe." And I hope you acknowledge, that preaching, admonitions and inſtructions, and that grace which God denies to none, who ſeriouſly aſk it, are ſufficient for ſalvation. So that by this anſwer of yours, there being no more neceſſity of force to make men of the true religion, than there is of caſtration to make men chaſte; it will ſtill remain that the magiſtrate, when he thinks fit, may, upon your principles, as well caſtrate men to make them chaſte, as uſe force to make them embrace the truth that muſt ſave them.

If caſtration be not neceſſary, "becauſe marriage and "the grace of God are ſufficient," without it: nor will force be neceſſary, becauſe preaching and the grace of God are ſufficient without it; and this, I think, by your own rule, where you tell us, "Where there are many "uſeful means, and ſome of them are ſufficient without "the reſt, there is no neceſſity of uſing them all." So that you muſt either quit your neceſſity of force, or take in caſtration too: which, however it might not go down with the untractable and deſperately perverſe and obſtinate people in theſe weſtern countries, yet is a doctrine, you may hope, may meet with a better reception in the ottoman empire, and recommend you to ſome of my mahometans.

To my ſaying, "If what we are apt to think uſeful, "were thence to be concluded ſo, we might be in dan-"ger to be obliged to believe the pretended miracles "of the church of Rome, by your way of reaſoning; "unleſs we will ſay, that which without impiety can-"not be ſaid, that the wiſe and benign diſpoſer and "governor of all things does not uſe all uſeful means "for promoting his own honour in the world, and the "good of ſouls." This, I think, will conclude as

much for miracles as for force: you reply, "you think "it will not; for in the place I intend, you ſpeak not "of uſeful, but of competent, i. e. ſufficient means. "Now competent or ſufficient means are neceſſary; "but you think no man will ſay that all uſeful means "are ſo: and therefore though, as you affirm, it cannot "be ſaid without impiety, that the wiſe and benign "diſpoſer and governor of all things has not furniſhed "mankind with competent means for the promoting "his own honour in the world, and the good of ſouls; "yet it is very agreeable with piety, and with truth too, "to ſay that he does not now uſe all uſeful means: "becauſe as none of his attributes obliges him to uſe "more than ſufficient means; ſo he may uſe ſufficient "means, without uſing all uſeful means. For where "there are many uſeful means, and ſome of them are "ſufficient without the reſt, there is no neceſſity of "them all. So that from God's not uſing miracles "now, to promote the true religion, I cannot conclude "that he does not think them uſeful now, but only "that he does not think them neceſſary. And therefore, "though what we are apt to think uſeful, were thence "to be concluded ſo; yet if whatever is uſeful, be not "likewiſe to be concluded neceſſary, there is no reaſon "to fear that we ſhould be obliged to believe the mira-"cles pretended to by the church of Rome. For if "miracles be not now neceſſary, there is no incon-"venience in thinking the miracles pretended to by "the church of Rome to be but pretended miracles." To which I anſwer, Put it how you will, for competent means, or uſeful means, it will conclude for miracles ſtill as much as for force. Your words are theſe, "If "ſuch a degree of outward force, as has been mention-"ed, be really of great and neceſſary uſe for the ad-"vancing theſe ends, as taking the world as we find it, "you ſay, you think it appears to be; then it muſt be "acknowledged there is a right ſomewhere to uſe it for "the advancing thoſe ends; unleſs we will ſay, what "without impiety cannot be ſaid, that the wiſe and "benign diſpoſer of all things has not furniſhed man-"kind with competent means for the promoting his

"own

" own honour in the world, and the good of ſouls." What, I beſeech you, now is the ſum of this argument, but this, " force is of great and neceſſary uſe; therefore " the wiſe and benign diſpoſer of all things, who will " not leave mankind unfurniſhed (which it would be " impiety to ſay) of competent means for the promot- " ing his honour in the world, and the good of ſouls, " has given ſomewhere a right to uſe it?"

Let us try it now, whether it will not do as well for miracles. Miracles " are of great and neceſſary uſe, as " great and neceſſary at leaſt as force; therefore the " wiſe and benign diſpoſer of all things, who will not " leave mankind unfurniſhed, which it would be im- " piety to ſay, of competent means for the promoting " his honour in the world, and the good of ſouls," has given ſomewhere a power of miracles. I aſk you, when I in the ſecond letter uſed your own words, applied to miracles inſtead of force, would they not conclude then as well for miracles as for force. For you muſt remem- ber there was not then in all your ſcheme one word of miracles to ſupply the place of force. Force alone was mentioned, force alone was neceſſary, all was laid on force. Nor was it eaſy to divine, that miracles ſhould be taken in, to mend the defects of your hypotheſis; which in your anſwer to me you now have done, and I eaſily allow it, without holding you to any thing you have ſaid, and ſhall always do ſo. For ſeeking truth, and not triumph, as you frequently ſuggeſt, I ſhall al- ways take your hypotheſis as you pleaſe to reform it, and either embrace it, or ſhow you why I do not.

Let us ſee therefore, whether this argument will do any better now your ſcheme is mended, and you make force or miracles neceſſary. If force or miracles are of " great and neceſſary uſe for the promoting true religion, " and the ſalvation of ſouls; then it muſt be acknow- " ledged, that there is ſomewhere a right to uſe the " one, or a power to do the other, for the advancing " thoſe ends; unleſs we will ſay, what without impiety " cannot be ſaid, that the wiſe and benign diſpoſer " and governour of all things has not furniſhed mankind " with competent means for the promoting his own

" honour, and the good of ſouls." From whence it will follow, if your argument be good, that where men have not a right to uſe force; there ſtill we are to expect miracles, unleſs we will ſay, &c. Now where the magiſtrates are not of the true religion, there by this part of your ſcheme there is a right in no-body to uſe force; for if there were, what need of miracles, as you tell us there was, in the firſt age of chriſtianity, to ſupply that want? Since the magiſtrates, who were of falſe religions then, were furniſhed with as much right, if that were enough, as they are now. So that where the magiſtrates are of falſe religions, there you muſt, upon your principles, affirm miracles are ſtill to ſupply the want of force; " unleſs you will ſay, what without im-
" piety cannot be ſaid, that the wiſe and benign diſ-
" poſer and governour of all things hath not furniſhed
" mankind with competent means for the promoting
" his own honour in the world, and the good of ſouls." Now how far this will favour the pretences of the church of Rome to miracles in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies, and other parts not under popiſh governments, you were beſt conſider. This is evident, that in all countries where the true religion is not received for the religion of the ſtate, and ſupported and encouraged by the laws of it; you muſt allow miracles to be as neceſſary now, as ever they were any where in the world, for the ſupply of the want of force, before the magiſtrates were chriſtians. And then what advantage your doctrine gives to the church of Rome, is very viſible. For they, like you, ſuppoſing theirs the only true religion, are ſupplied by you with this argument for it, viz. That the " true religion will not prevail by its own light and
" ſtrength, without the aſſiſtance of miracles or autho-
" rity. Which are the competent means, which, with-
" out impiety, it cannot be ſaid, that the wiſe and
" benign diſpoſer and governour of all things has not
" furniſhed mankind with." From whence they will not think it hard to draw this conſequence, that therefore the wiſe and benign governor of all things has continued in their church the power of miracles; (which yours does not ſo much as pretend to) to ſupply the want

want of the magiſtrate's aſſiſtance, where that cannot be had to make the true religion prevail. And if a papiſt ſhould preſs you with this argument, I would gladly know what you would reply to him.

Though this be enough to make good what I ſaid, yet ſince I ſeek truth, more than my own juſtification, let us examine a little what it is you here ſay of "competent means. Competent means, you ſay, are "neceſſary; but you think no man will ſay, all uſeful "means are ſo." If you think you ſpeak plain, clear, determined ſenſe, when you uſed this good engliſh word competent, I pity you: if you did it with ſkill, I ſend you to my pagans and mahometans. But this ſafe way of talking, though it be not altogether ſo clear, yet it ſo often occurs in you, that it is hard to judge, whether it be art or nature. Now pray what do you mean by "mankind's being furniſhed with competent "means?" If it be ſuch means as any are prevailed on by to embrace the truth that muſt ſave them, preaching is a competent means, for by preaching alone, without force, many are prevailed on, and become truly chriſtians; and then your force, by your own confeſſion, is not neceſſary. If by competent, you underſtand ſuch means, by which all men are prevailed on, or the majority, to become truly chriſtians, I fear your force is no competent means.

Which way ever you put it, you muſt acknowledge mankind to be deſtitute of competent means, or your moderate force not to be that neceſſary competent means: ſince whatever right the magiſtrates may have had any where to uſe it, wherever it has not been uſed, let the cauſe be what it will that kept this means from being uſed, there the people have been deſtitute of that means.

But you will think there is little reaſon to complain of obſcurity, you having abundantly explained what you mean by competent, in ſaying competent, i. e. ſufficient means. So that we have nothing to do but to find out what you mean by ſufficient: and the meaning of that word, in your uſe of it, you happily give us in theſe following, "What does any man mean by ſufficient "evidence,

" evidence, but such as will certainly win assent where-
" ever it is duly considered?" Apply this to your means, and then tell me, whether your force be such competent, i. e. sufficient means, that it certainly produced embracing the truth, wherever it was duly, i. e. your way applied; if it did not, it is plain it is not your competent sufficient means, and so the world, without any such imputation to the divine wisdom and benignity, might be without it. If you will say it was sufficient, and did produce that end wherever it was applied, I desire you then to tell me whether mankind hath been always furnished with competent means. You have it now in your choice, either to talk impiously, or renounce force, and disown it to be competent means; one of the two I do not see how, by your own argument, you can avoid.

But to lay by your competent and sufficient means, and to ease you of the uncertainty and difficulty you will be in to determine what is so, in respect of mankind; I suppose it will be little less " impious to say, that the " wise and benign disposer and governour hath not fur-
" nished mankind with necessary means, as to say he " hath not furnished them with competent means." Now, Sir, if your moderate penalties, and nothing else, be, since the withdrawing of miracles, this necessary means, what will be left you to say, by your argument, of the wisdom and benignity of God in all those countries, where moderate penalties are not made use of? where men are not furnished with this means to bring them to the true religion? For unless you can say, that your moderate penalties have been constantly made use of in the world for the support and encouragement of the true religion, and to bring men to it, ever since the withdrawing of miracles; you must confess, that not only some countries, (which yet were enough against you) but mankind in general, have been unfurnished of the " necessary means for the promoting the honour " of God in the world, and the salvation of men's " souls." This argument out of your own mouth, were there no other, is sufficient to show the weakness and unreasonableness of your scheme; and I hope the due

due conſideration of it will make you cautious another time, how you intitle the wiſdom and benignity of God to the ſupport of what you once fancy to be of great and neceſſary uſe.

I having thereupon ſaid, " Let us not therefore be " more wiſe than our Maker in that ſtupendous and " ſupernatural work of our ſalvation. The ſcrip- " ture," &c.

You reply, " Though the work of our ſalvation be, " as I juſtly call it, ſtupendous and ſupernatural; yet " you ſuppoſe no ſober man doubts, but it both ad- " mits and ordinarily requires the uſe of natural and " human means, in ſubordination to that grace which " works it."

If you had taken notice of theſe immediately follow- ing words of mine, " The ſcripture that reveals it to " us, contains all that we can know or do, in order to " it; and where that is ſilent, it is preſumption in us " to direct;" you would not have thought what you here ſay a ſufficient anſwer: for though God does make uſe of natural and human means in ſubordination to grace, yet it is not for man to make uſe of any means, in ſubordination to his grace, which God has not ap- pointed; out of a conceit it may do ſome ſervice in- directly and at a diſtance.

The whole covenant and work of grace is the contri- vance of God's infinite wiſdom. What it is, and by what means he will diſpenſe his grace, is known to us by revelation only; which is ſo little ſuited to human wiſ- dom, that the apoſtle calls it " the fooliſhneſs of preach- " ing." In the ſcripture is contained all that revelation, and all things neceſſary for that work, all the means of grace; there God has declared all that he would have done for the ſalvation of ſouls; and if he had thought force neceſſary to be joined with the fooliſhneſs of preaching, no doubt but he would ſomewhere or other have revealed it, and not left it to the wiſdom of man: which how diſproportioned and oppoſite it is to the ways and wiſdom of God in the goſpel, and how unfit to be truſted in the buſineſs of ſalvation, you may ſee, 1 Cor. i. from verſe 17 to the end.

" The

" The work of grace admits, and ordinarily requires " the uſe of natural and human means." I deny it not: let us now hear your inference: " Therefore till " I have ſhown that no penal laws, that can be made, " can do any ſervice towards the ſalvation of men's " ſouls in ſubordination to God's grace, or that God " has forbidden the magiſtrate" to uſe force, for ſo you ought to put it, but you rather chooſe, according to your ordinary way, to uſe general and doubtful words; and therefore you ſay, " to ſerve him in that great work " with the authority which he has given him; there will " be no occaſion for the caution I have given," not to be wiſer than our Maker in that ſtupendous work of our ſalvation. By which way of arguing, any thing that I cannot ſhow, cannot poſſibly, cannot indirectly and at a diſtance, or by accident, do any ſervice, or God has not forbidden, may be made uſe of for the ſalvation of ſouls. I ſuppoſe you mean expreſsly forbidden, for elſe I might think theſe words, [" Who has required this at your " hands?"] ſufficient prohibition of it. The ſum of your argument is, " what cannot be ſhowed not to do " any ſervice, may be uſed as a human means in ſub- " ordination to grace, in the work of ſalvation." To which I reply, That what may, through the grace of God, ſometimes do ſome ſervice, cannot, without a further warrant from revelation than ſuch uſefulneſs, be required, or made uſe of as a ſubordinate means to grace. For if ſo, then auricular confeſſion, penance, pilgrimages, proceſſions, &c. which no-body can ſhow do not ever do any ſervice, at leaſt, indirectly and at a diſtance, towards the ſalvation of ſouls, may all be juſtified.

It is not enough that it cannot be ſhown that it cannot do any ſervice to juſtify its uſefulneſs; for what is there that may not, indirectly and at a diſtance, or by accident, do ſome ſervice? To ſhow that it is a human means, that God has no-where appointed, in ſubordination to grace, in the ſupernatural work of ſalvation, is enough to prove it an unwarrantable boldneſs to uſe it: and much more ſo in the preſent caſe of force, which, if put into the magiſtrate's hands with power to uſe

uſe it in matters of religion, will do more harm than good, as I think I have ſufficiently ſhown.

And therefore, ſince, according to you, the magiſtrate's commiſſion to uſe force for the ſalvation of ſouls, is from the law of nature; which commiſſion reaches to none, ſince the revelation of the goſpel, but chriſtian magiſtrates; it is more natural to conclude, were there nothing elſe in the caſe but the ſilence of ſcripture, that the chriſtian magiſtrate has no ſuch power, becauſe he has no ſuch commiſſion any where in the goſpel, wherein all things are appointed neceſſary to ſalvation; than that there was ſo clear a commiſſion given to all magiſtrates by the law of nature, that it is neceſſary to ſhow a prohibition from revelation, if one will deny chriſtian magiſtrates to have that power. Since the commiſſion of the law of nature to magiſtrates, being only that general one, of doing good according to the beſt of their judgments: if that extends to the uſe of force in matters of religion, it will abundantly more oppoſe than promote the true religion; if force in the caſe has any efficacy at all, and ſo do more harm than good: which though it ſhows not, what you here demand, that it cannot do any ſervice towards the ſalvation of men's ſouls, for that cannot be ſhown of any thing; yet it ſhows the diſſervice, it does, is ſo much more, than any ſervice can be expected from it, that it can never be proved, that God has given power to magiſtrates to uſe it by the commiſſion they have of doing good, from the law of nature.

But whilſt you tell me, "Till I have ſhown that "force and penalties cannot do any ſervice towards the "ſalvation of ſouls, there will be no occaſion for the "caution I gave you," not to be wiſer than our Maker in that ſtupendous and ſupernatural work; you have forgot your own confeſſion, that it is not enough to authorize the uſe of force, that it may be uſeful, if it be not alſo neceſſary. And when you can prove ſuch means neceſſary, which though it cannot be ſhown, never upon any occaſion to do any ſervice; yet may be, and is abundantly ſhown to do little ſervice, and ſo uncertainly, that if it be uſed, it will, if it has any efficacy, do

do more harm than good: if you can, I say, prove such a means as that necessary, I think I may yield you the cause. But the use of it has so much certain harm, and so little and uncertain good in it, that it can never be supposed included or intended in the general commission to the magistrates, of doing good; which may serve for an answer to your next paragraph.

Only let me take notice, that you here make this commission of the law of nature to extend the use of force, only to "induce those, who would not otherwise, to hear what may and ought to move them to "embrace the truth." They have heard all that is offered to move them to embrace, i. e. believe, but are not moved: is the magistrate by the law of nature commissioned to punish them for what is not in their power? for faith is the gift of God, and not in a man's power: or is the magistrate commissioned by the law of nature, which impowers him in general, only to do them good? Is he, I say, commissioned to make them lye, and profess that which they do not believe? And is this for their good? If he punish them till they embrace, i. e. believe, he punishes them for what is not in their power; if till they embrace, i. e. barely profess, he punishes them for what is not for their good: to neither of which can he be commissioned by the law of nature.

To my saying, "Till you can show us a commission "in scripture, it will be fit for us to obey that precept "of the gospel, Mark iv. 24, which bids us take heed "what we hear." You reply, That this "you suppose "is only intended for the vulgar reader; for it ought "to be rendered, attend to what you hear;" which you prove out of Grotius. What if I or my readers are not so learned, as to understand either the greek original, or Grotius's latin comment? Or if we did, are we to be blamed for understanding the scripture in that sense, which the national, i. e. as you say, the true religion authorizes, and which you tell us would be a fault in us if we did not believe?

For if, as you suppose, there be sufficient provision made in England for the instructing all men in the truth; we cannot then but take the words in this sense, it being

ing that which the public authority has given them; for if we are not to follow the ſenſe as it is given us in the tranſlation authorized by our governors, and uſed in our worſhip eſtabliſhed by law; but muſt ſeek it elſewhere; it will be hard to find, how there is any other proviſion made for inſtructing men in the ſenſe of the ſcripture, which is the truth that muſt ſave them, but to leave them to their own inquiry and judgment, and to themſelves, to take whom they think beſt for interpreters and expounders of ſcripture, and to quit that of the true church, which ſhe has given in her tranſlation. This is the liberty you take to differ from the true church, when you think fit, and it will ſerve your purpoſe. She ſays, "Take heed what you hear;" but you ſay, the true ſenſe is, "Attend to what you "hear." Methinks you ſhould not be at ſuch variance with diſſenters; for after all, NOTHING IS SO LIKE A NONCONFORMIST AS A CONFORMIST. Though it be certainly every one's right to underſtand the ſcripture in that ſenſe which appears trueſt to him, yet I do not ſee how you, upon your principles, can depart from that which the church of England has given it: but you, I find, when you think fit, take that liberty; and ſo much liberty as that, would, I think, ſatisfy all the diſſenters in England.

As to your other place of ſcripture; if St. Paul, as it ſeems to me, in that tenth to the Romans, where ſhowing that the gentiles were provided with all things neceſſary to ſalvation, as well as the jews; and that by having men ſent to them to preach the goſpel, that proviſion was made; what you ſay in the two next paragraphs will ſhow us, that you underſtand, that the greek word ἀκοὴ, ſignifies both hearing and report; but does no more anſwer the force of thoſe two verſes, againſt you, than if you had ſpared all you ſaid with your greek criticiſm. The words of St. Paul are theſe: "How "then ſhall they call on him on whom they have not "believed? And how ſhall they believe in him of "whom they have not heard? And how ſhall they hear "without a preacher? And how ſhall they preach, ex-"cept they be ſent? So then faith cometh by hearing,

" and hearing by the word of God," Rom. x. 14, 15, 17. In this deduction of the means of propagating the gospel, we may well suppose St. Paul would have put in miracles or penalties, if, as you say, one of them had been necessary. But whether or no every reader will think St. Paul set down in that place all necessary means, I know not; but this, I am confident, he will think, that the New Testament does; and then I ask, Whether there be in it one word of force to be used to bring men to be christians, or to hearken to the good tidings of salvation offered in the gospel?

To my asking, " What if God, for reasons best " known to himself, would not have men compelled?" You answer, " If he would not have them compelled, " now miracles are ceased, as far as moderate penalties " compel, (otherwise you are not concerned in the de- " mand) he would have told us so." Concerning miracles supplying the want of force, I shall need to say nothing more here: but to your answer, that " God " would have told us so." I shall in few words state the matter to you. You first suppose force necessary to compel men to hear; and thereupon suppose the magistrate invested with a power to compel them to hear; and from thence peremptorily declare, that if God would not have force used, he would have told us so. You suppose also, that it must be only moderate force. Now may we not ask one, that is so far of the council of the Almighty, that he can positively say what he would or would not have; to tell us, whether it be not as probable that God, who knows the temper of man that he has made, who knows how apt he is not to spare any degree of force when he believes he has a commission to compel men to do any thing in their power; and who knows also how prone man is to think it reasonable to do so: whether, I say, it is not as probable that God, if he would have the magistrate to use none but moderate force to compel men to hear, would also have told us so? Fathers are not more apt than magistrates to strain their power beyond what is convenient for the education of their children; and yet it has pleased God to tell them in the New Testament,

of

of this moderation, by a precept more than once repeated.

To my demanding, " What if God would have men " left to their freedom in this point, if they will hear, " or if they will forbear; will you conſtrain them? " Thus we are ſure he did with his own people," &c. You anſwer, " But thoſe words, whether they will hear, " or whether they will forbear, which we find thrice " uſed in the prophet Ezekiel, are nothing at all to my " purpoſe. For by hearing there, no man underſtands " the bare giving an ear to what was to be preached; " nor yet the conſidering it only; but the complying " with it, and obeying it; according to the paraphraſe " which Grotius gives of the words." Methinks, for this once, you might have allowed me to have hit upon ſomething to the purpoſe, you having denied me it in ſo many other places: if it were but for pity; and one other reaſon; which is, that all you have to ſay againſt it, is, that " by hearing there, no man underſtands the " bare giving an ear to what was to be preached; nor " yet the conſidering it; but the complying with it, " and obeying it." If I miſremember not, your hypotheſis pretends the uſe of force to be not barely to make men give an ear, nor yet to conſider; but to make them conſider as they ought; i. e. ſo as not to reject; and therefore, though this text out of Ezekiel be nothing to the purpoſe againſt bare giving an ear; yet if you pleaſe, let it ſtand as if it were to the purpoſe againſt your hypotheſis, till you can find ſome other anſwer to it.

If you will give yourſelf the pains to turn to Acts xxviii. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, you will read theſe words, " And ſome believed the things that were ſpoken, and " ſome believed not. And when they agreed not among " themſelves they departed, after that Paul had ſpoken " one word, Well ſpake the Holy Ghoſt by Eſaias the " prophet, unto our fathers, ſaying, Go unto this peo- " ple, and ſay, hearing, ye ſhall hear, and ſhall not " underſtand; and ſeeing, ye ſhall ſee, and not per- " ceive. For the heart of this people is waxed groſs, " and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have

" they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and " hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, " and should be converted, and I should heal them. " Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation " of God is sent unto the gentiles, and that they will " hear it."

If one should come now, and out of your treatise, called " The Argument of the Letter concerning Tole- " ration considered and answered," reason thus, " It is " evident that these jews have not sought the truth in " this matter, with that application of mind, and free- " dom of judgment which was requisite; whilst they " suffered their lusts and passions to sit in judgment, " and manage the inquiry. The impressions of edu- " cation, the reverence and admiration of persons, " worldly respects, and the like incompetent motives, " have determined them. Now if this be the case; if " these men are averse to a due consideration of things, " where they are most concerned to use it; WHAT " MEANS IS THERE LEFT (besides the grace of God) to " reduce them out of the wrong way they are in, but " to lay thorns and briars in it?" Would you not think this a good argument to show the necessity of using force and penalties upon these men in the Acts, who refused to be brought to embrace the true religion upon the preaching of St. Paul? " For what other means was " left, what human method could be used to bring " them to make a wiser and more rational choice, but " laying such penalties upon them as might balance the " weight of such prejudices, which inclined them to " prefer a false way before the true?" Tell me, I be- seech you, would you not, had you been a christian ma- gistrate in those days, have thought yourself obliged to try, by force, " to overbalance the weight of those pre- " judices which inclined them to prefer a false way to " the true?" For there was no other human means left; and if that be not enough to prove the necessity of using it, you have no proof of any necessity of force at all.

If you would have laid penalties upon them, I ask you, what if God, for reasons best known to himself,

thought it not neceſſary to uſe any other human means but preaching and perſuaſion? You have a ready anſwer, there is no other human means but force, and ſome other human means beſides preaching is neceſſary, i. e. in your opinion: and is it not fit your authority ſhould carry it? For as to miracles, whether you think fit to rank them amongſt human means or no; or whether or no there were any ſhowed to theſe unbelieving jews, to ſupply the want of force; I gueſs, in this caſe, you will not be much helped, whichever you ſuppoſe: though to one unbiaſſed, who reads that chapter, it will, I imagine, appear moſt probable that St. Paul, when he thus parted with them, had done no miracles amongſt them.

But you have, at the cloſe of the paragraph before us, provided a ſalvo for all, in telling us, "However the "penalties you defend, are not ſuch as can any way be "pretended to take away men's freedom in this point." The queſtion is, whether there be a neceſſity of uſing other human means but preaching, for the bringing men to embrace the truth that muſt ſave them; and whether force be it? God himſelf ſeems, in the places quoted, and others, to teach us, that he would have left men to their freedom from any conſtraint of force in that point; and you anſwer, "The penalties you defend "are not ſuch as can any ways be pretended to take "away men's freedom in this point." Tell us what you mean by theſe words of yours, "take "away men's freedom in this point;" and then apply it. I think it pretty hard to uſe penalties and force to any man, without taking away his freedom from penalties and force. Farther, the penalties you think neceſſary, if we may believe you yourſelf, are to "be ſuch as may balance the weight of thoſe "prejudices, which incline men to prefer a falſe "way before a true:" whether theſe be ſuch as you will defend, is another queſtion. This, I think, is to be made plain, that you muſt go beyond the lower degrees of force, and moderate penalties, to balance thoſe prejudices.

To my saying, "That the method of the gospel is to "pray and beseech, and that if God had thought it ne- "cessary to have men punished to make them give ear, "he could have called magistrates to be spreaders of "the gospel, as well as poor fishermen; or Paul a "persecutor; who yet wanted not power to punish "Ananias and Sapphira, and the incestuous corinthian." You reply, "Though it be the method of the gospel, "for the ministers of it to pray and beseech men; yet "it appears from my own words here, both that punish- "ments may be sometimes necessary; and that punish- "ing, and that even by those who are to pray and be- "seech, is consistent with that method." I fear, Sir, you so greedily lay hold upon any examples of punish- ment, when on any account they come in your way; that you give yourself not liberty to consider whether they are for your purpose or no; or else you would scarce infer, as you do from my words, that, in your case, "punishments may be sometimes necessary." Ananias and Sapphira were punished: "therefore it "appears, say you, that punishments may be sometimes "necessary." For what, I beseech you? For the only end, you say, punishments are useful in religion, i. e. to make men consider. So that Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead: for what end? To make them con- sider. If you had given yourself the leisure to have re- flected on this, and the other instance of the incestuous corinthian; it is possible you would have found neither of them to have served very well to show punishment necessary to bring men to embrace the true religion; for both these were punishments laid on those who had already embraced the true religion, and were in the communion of the true church; and so can only show, if you will infer any thing concerning the necessity of punishments from them, that punishments may be some- times necessary for those who are in the communion of the true church. And of that you may make your advan- tage.

As to your other inferences from my words, viz. "That punishing, and that even by those who are, as "ambassadors, to pray and beseech; is consistent with

"that

" that method;" when they can do it as the apoſtles did, by the immediate direction and aſſiſtance of the ſpirit of God, I ſhall eaſily allow it to be conſiſtent with the method of the goſpel. If that will not content you, it is plain, you have an itch to be handling the ſecular ſword; and ſince Chriſt has not given you the power you deſire; you would be executing the magiſtrate's pretended commiſſion from the law of nature. One thing more let me mind you of, and that is, that if, from the puniſhments of Ananias and Sapphira, and the inceſtuous corinthian, you can infer a neceſſity of puniſhment to make men conſider; it will follow that there was a neceſſity of puniſhment to make men conſider, notwithſtanding miracles; which cannot therefore be ſuppoſed to ſupply the want of puniſhments.

To my aſking, " What if God, foreſeeing this force " would be in the hands of men, as paſſionate, as humourſome, as liable to prejudice and errour, as the " reſt of their brethren; did not think it a proper " means to bring men into the right way?" You reply, " But if there be any thing of an argument in this, it " proves that there ought to be no civil government in " the world; and ſo proving too much, proves nothing " at all." This you ſay; but you being one of thoſe mortals who is liable to errour as well as your brethren; you cannot expect it ſhould be received for infallible truth, till you have proved it; and that you will never do, till you can ſhow, that there is as abſolute a neceſſity of force in the magiſtrate's hands for the ſalvation of ſouls, as there is of force in the magiſtrate's hands for the preſervation of civil ſociety; and next, till you have proved that force, in the hands of men, as paſſionate and humourſome; or liable to prejudice and errour as their brethren; would contribute as much to the bringing men, and keeping them in the right way to ſalvation, as it does to the ſupport of civil ſociety, and the keeping men at peace in it.

Where men cannot live together without mutual injuries, not to be avoided without force, reaſon has taught them to ſeek a remedy in government; which always places power ſomewhere in the ſociety to reſtrain

and punish such injuries; which power, whether placed in the community itself, or some chosen by the community to govern it, must still be in the hands of men; and where, as in societies of civilized and settled nations, the form of the government places this power out of the community itself, it is unavoidable, that out of men, such as they are, some should be made magistrates, and have coercive power of force put into their hands, to govern and direct the society for the publick good; without which force, so placed in the hands of men, there could be no civil society; nor the ends for which it is instituted, to any degree attained. And thus government is the will of God.

It is the will of God also, that men should be saved; but to this, it is not necessary that force or coactive power should be put into men's hands; because God can, and hath provided other means to bring men to salvation: to which, you indeed suppose, but can never prove force necessary.

The passions, humours, liableness to prejudices and errours, common to magistrates with other men, do not render force in their hands so dangerous and unuseful to the ends of society, which is the public peace, as to the ends of religion, which is the salvation of men's souls. For though men of all ranks could be content to have their own humours, passions, and prejudices satisfied; yet when they come to make laws, which are to direct their force in civil matters, they are driven to oppose their laws to the humours, passions, and prejudices of men in general, whereby their own come to be restrained: for if law-makers, in making of laws, did not direct them against the irregular humours, prejudices, and passions of men, which are apt to mislead them; if they did not endeavour, with their best judgment, to bring men from their humours aad passions, to the obedience and practice of right reason; the society could not subsist; and so they themselves would be in danger to lose their station in it, and be exposed to the unrestrained humours, passions, and violence of others. And hence it comes, that be men as humourSome, passionate, and prejudiced as they will, they are still by their own

interest

intereſt obliged to make uſe of their beſt ſkill, and with their moſt unprejudiced and ſedateſt thoughts, take care of the government, and endeavour to preſerve the commonwealth; and therefore, notwithſtanding their humours and paſſions, their liableneſs to errour and prejudice; they do provide pretty well for the ſupport of ſociety, and the power in their hands is of uſe to the maintenance of it.

But in matters of religion it is quite otherwiſe; you had told us, about the latter end of your "Argument," p. 22, how liable men were in chooſing their religion to be miſled by humour, paſſion, and prejudice; and therefore it was not fit that in a buſineſs of ſuch concernment they ſhould be left to themſelves: and hence, in this matter of religion, you would have them ſubjected to the coactive power of the magiſtrate. But this contrivance is viſibly of no advantage to the true religion, nor can ſerve at all to ſecure men from a wrong choice. For the magiſtrates, by their humours, prejudices, and paſſions, which they are born to like other men, being as liable, and likely to be miſled in the choice of their religion, as any of their brethren, as conſtant experience hath always ſhown; what advantage could it be to mankind, for the ſalvation of their ſouls, that the magiſtrates of the world ſhould have power to uſe force to bring men to that religion which they, each of them, by whatſoever humour, paſſion, or prejudice influenced, had choſen to themſelves as the true? For whatſoever you did, I think with reverence we may ſay, that God foreſaw, that whatever commiſſion one magiſtrate had by the law of nature, all magiſtrates had: and that commiſſion, if there were any ſuch, could be only to uſe their coactive power to bring men to the religion they believed to be true; whether it were really the true or no; and therefore I ſhall, without taking away government out of the world, or ſo much as queſtioning it, ſtill think this a reaſonable queſtion: "What if "God, foreſeeing this force would be in the hands of "men, as paſſionate, as humourſome, as liable to pre-"judice and errour, as the reſt of their brethren; did "not think it a proper means, in ſuch hands, to bring

"men

" men into the right way?" And that it needs a better anſwer than you have given to it: and therefore you might have ſpared the pains you have taken in this paragraph, to prove that the magiſtrate's being liable as much as other men to humour, prejudice, paſſion, and errour, makes not force, in his hands, wholly unſerviceable to the adminiſtration of civil government; which is what no-body denies: and you would have better employed it to prove, that if the magiſtrate's being as liable to paſſion, humour, prejudice, and errour, as other men, made force, in his hands, improper to bring men to the true religion; this would take away government out of the world: which is a conſequence, I think, I may deny.

To which let me now add, what if God foreſaw, that if force, of any kind or degree whatſoever, were allowed in behalf of truth, it would be uſed by erring, paſſionate, prejudiced men, to the reſtraint and ruin of truth; as conſtant experience in all ages has ſhown; and therefore commanded that the tares ſhould be ſuffered to grow with the wheat, till the harveſt; when the infallible judge ſhall ſever them. That parable of our Saviour's plainly tells us, if force were once permitted, even in favour of the true religion, what miſchief it was like to do in the miſapplication of it, by forward, buſy, miſtaken men; and therefore he wholly forbid it; and yet, I hope, this does not take away civil government out of the world.

To my demanding, " What if there be other means?" and ſaying, " Then yours ceaſes to be neceſſary upon " that account, that there is no other means left; for " the grace of God is another means." You anſwer, That " though the grace of God is another means, yet " it is none of the means of which you were ſpeaking " in the place I refer to; which any one, who reads " that paragraph, will find to be only human means." In that place you were endeavouring to prove force neceſſary to bring men to the true religion, as appears; and there having dilated for four or five pages together upon the " careleſſneſs, prejudices, paſſions, luſts, im- " preſſions of education, worldly reſpects," and other

the

the like cauſes, which you think miſlead and keep men from the true religion; you at laſt conclude force neceſſary to bring men to it, becauſe admonitions and intreaties not prevailing, there is no other means left. To this, grace being inſtanced in as another means, you tell us here you mean no other human means left. So that to prove force neceſſary, you muſt prove that God would have other human means uſed beſides praying, preaching, perſuaſion, and inſtruction; and for this, you will need to bring a plain direction from revelation for your moderate puniſhments; unleſs you will pretend to know, by your own natural wiſdom, what means God has made neceſſary; without which, thoſe whom he hath foreknown and predeſtinated, and will in his good time call, Romans viii. 29, by ſuch means as he thinks fit, according to his purpoſe; cannot be brought into the way of ſalvation. Perhaps you have ſome warrant we know not of, to enter thus boldly into the counſel of God; without which, in another man, a modeſt Chriſtian would be apt to think it preſumption.

You ſay, there are many who are not prevailed on by prayers, intreaties, and exhortations, to embrace the true religion. What then is to be done? "Some de-"grees of force are neceſſary" to be uſed? Why? Becauſe there is no other human means left. Many are not prevailed on by your moderate force; What then is to be done? Greater degrees of force are neceſſary, becauſe there is no other human means left. No, ſay you, God has made moderate force neceſſary, becauſe there is no other human means left where preaching and intreaties will not prevail; but he has not made greater degrees of force neceſſary, becauſe there is no other human means left where moderate force will not prevail. So that your rule changing, where the reaſon continues the ſame, we muſt conclude you have ſome way of judging concerning the purpoſes and ways of the Almighty in the work of ſalvation, which every one underſtands not. You would not elſe, upon ſo ſlight ground as you have yet produced for it, which is nothing but your own imagination, make force, your moderate force ſo neceſſary, that you bring in queſtion, the wiſdom and bounty

bounty of the Diſpoſer and Governor of all things, as if he " had not furniſhed mankind with competent means " for the promoting his own honour in the world, and " the good of ſouls," if your moderate force were wanting to bring them to the true religion; whereas you know, that moſt of the nations of the world always were deſtitute of this human means to bring them to the true religion. And I imagine you would be put to it, to name me one now, that is furniſhed with it.

Beſides, if you pleaſe to remember what you ſay in the next words: " And therefore, though the grace of God " be both a proper and ſufficient means, and ſuch as can " work by itſelf, and without which neither penalties " nor any other means can do any thing;" and by conſequence can make any means effectual: how can you ſay any human means, in this ſupernatural work, unleſs what God has declared to be ſo, is neceſſary? Preaching, and inſtruction, and exhortation, are human means that he has appointed: theſe, therefore, men may and ought to uſe; they have a commiſſion from God, and may expect his bleſſing and the aſſiſtance of his grace; but to ſuppoſe, when they are uſed and prevail not, that force is neceſſary, becauſe theſe are not ſufficient, is to exclude grace, and aſcribe this work to human means; as in effect you do, when you call force competent and ſufficient means, as you have done. For if bare preaching, by the aſſiſtance of grace, can and will certainly prevail: and moderate penalties, as you confeſs, or any kind of force, without the aſſiſtance of grace, can do nothing; how can you ſay, that force is in any caſe a more neceſſary, or a more competent, or ſufficient means, than bare preaching and inſtruction? unleſs you can ſhow us, that God hath promiſed the co-operation and aſſiſtance of his grace to force, and not to preaching? The contrary whereof has more of appearance. Preaching and perſuaſion are not competent means, you ſay; Why? becauſe, without the co-operation of grace, they can do nothing: but by the aſſiſtance of grace they can prevail even without force. Force too, without grace, you acknowledge can do nothing; but, joined with preaching and grace, it can prevail. Why then, I pray,

pray, is it a more competent means than preaching; or why neceſſary, where preaching prevails not? ſince it can do nothing without that, which, if joined to preaching, can make preaching effectual without it.

You go on, "Yet it may be true however, that when "admonitions and intreaties fail, there is no HUMAN "means left but penalties, to bring prejudiced perſons "to hear and conſider what may convince them of "their errours, and diſcover the truth to them: and "then penalties will be neceſſary in reſpect to that end, "as an HUMAN means." Let it be true or not true, that when treaties, &c. fail, there is no HUMAN means left but penalties: your inference I deny, that then penalties will be neceſſary as an HUMAN means. For I aſk you, ſince you lay ſo much ſtreſs to ſo little purpoſe on HUMAN means, is ſome human means neceſſary? if that be your meaning, you have human means in the caſe, viz. admonitions, intreaties; being inſtant in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon. I aſk you again, Are penalties neceſſary becauſe the end could not be obtained by preaching, without them? that you cannot ſay, for grace co-operating with preaching will prevail: are penalties then neceſſary, as ſure to produce that end? nor ſo are they neceſſary; for without the aſſiſtance of grace, you confeſs, they can do nothing. So that penalties, neither as human means, nor as any means, are at all neceſſary. And now you may underſtand what I intend, by ſaying that the grace of God is the only means, which is the inquiry of your next paragraph, viz. this I intend, that it is the only efficacious means, without which all human means is ineffectual. You tell me, If by it "I intend that it does either always, or ordinarily "exclude all other means; you ſee no ground I have "to ſay it." And I ſee no ground you have to think I intended, that it excludes any other means that God in his goodneſs will be pleaſed to make uſe of: but this I intend by it, and this, I think, I have ground to ſay, that it excludes all the human means of force from being neceſſary, or ſo much as lawful to be uſed; unleſs God hath required it by ſome more authentic declaration than your bare ſaying or imagining it is neceſſary. And

you

you must have more than human confidence, if you continue to mix this poor and human contrivance of yours with the wisdom and counsel of God in the work of salvation; since he having declared the means and methods to be used for the saving men's souls, has in the revelation of the Gospel, by your own confession, prescribed no such human means.

To my saying, "God alone can open the ear that it "may hear, and open the heart that it may understand:" You reply, "But, by your favour, this does not prove "that he makes use of no means in doing of it." Nor needs it: it is enough for me, if it proves, that if preaching and instruction do not open the ear, or the heart, it is not necessary any one should try his strength with a hammer or an augre. Man is not in this business, (where no means can be effectual, without the assistance and co-operation of his grace) to make use of any means which God hath not prescribed. You here set up a way of propagating Christianity according to your fancy, and tell us how you would have the work of the Gospel carried on: you commission the magistrate by the argument of congruity; you find an efficacy in punishment towards the converting of men; you limit the force to be used to low and moderate degrees; and to countries where sufficient means of instruction are provided by the law, and where the magistrate's religion is the true, i. e. where it pleases you; and all this without any direction from God, or any authority so much as pretended from the Gospel; and without its being truly for the propagation of Christianity, but only so much of it as you think fit, and what else you are pleased to join to it. Why else, in the religion you are content to have established by law, and promoted by penalties, is any thing more or less required, than is expressly contained in the New Testament?

This indeed is well suited to any one, who would have a power of punishing those that differ from his opinion, and would have men compelled to conformity in England. But in this your fair contrivance, what becomes of the rest of mankind, left to wander in darkness out of this Goshen, who neither have, nor (according to your scheme)

ſcheme) can have, your neceſſary means of force and penalties to bring them to embrace the truth that muſt ſave them? for if that be neceſſary, they cannot without a miracle, either prince or people, be wrought on without it. If a Papiſt at Rome, a Lutheran at Stockholm, or a Calviniſt at Geneva, ſhould argue thus for his church, would you not ſay, that ſuch as theſe looked like the thoughts of a poor prejudiced mind? But they may miſtake, and you cannot; they may be prejudiced, but you cannot. Say too, if you pleaſe, you are confident you are in the right, but they cannot be confident they are ſo. This I am ſure, God's thoughts are not as man's thoughts, nor his ways as man's ways, Iſaiah lv. 8. And it may abate any one's confidence of the neceſſity or uſe of puniſhments, for not receiving our Saviour, or his religion, when thoſe who had the power of miracles were told, that "they knew not what manner of ſpirit "they were of," when they would have commanded down fire from heaven, Luke ix. 55. But you do well to take care to have the church you are of, ſupported by force and penalties, whatever becomes of the propagation of the Goſpel, or the ſalvation of men's ſouls, in other parts of the world, as not coming within your hypotheſis.

In your next paragraph, to prove that God does bleſs the uſe of force, you ſay you ſuppoſe I mean, by the words you there cite, that the "magiſtrate has no "ground to hope that God will bleſs any penalties that "he may uſe to bring men to hear and conſider the "doctrine of ſalvation; or (which is the ſame thing) "that God does not (at leaſt not ordinarily) afford his "grace and aſſiſtance to them who are brought by ſuch "penalties to hear and conſider that doctrine, to enable "them to hear and conſider it as they ought, i, e. ſo as "to be moved heartily to embrace it." You tell me, "If this be my meaning, then to let me ſee that it is "not true, you ſhall only deſire me to tell you, whether "they that are ſo brought to hear and conſider, "are bound to believe the Goſpel or not? If I ſay they "are; (and you ſuppoſe I dare not ſay otherwiſe;) "then it evidently follows, that God does afford them "that

" that grace which is requisite to enable them to be-
" lieve the Gospel: because without that grace it is im-
" possible for them to believe it; and they cannot be
" bound to believe what it is impossible for them to
" believe." To which, I shall only answer, that by this irrefragable argument it is evident, that wherever due penalties have been used, for those you tell us are sufficient and competent means, to make men hear and consider as they ought; there all men were brought to believe the Gospel: which, whether you will resolve with yourself to be true or false, will be to me indifferent, and on either hand equally advantage your cause. Had you appealed to experience for the success of the use of force by the magistrate, your argument had not shown half so much depth of theological learning: but the mischief is, that if you will not make it all of a piece scholastic; and by arguing that all whom the magistrates use force upon, " are brought to consider
" as they ought, and to all that are so wrought upon
" God does afford that grace which is requisite;" and so roundly conclude for a greater success of force, to make men believe the gospel, than ever our Saviour and the Apostles had by their preaching and miracles; for that wrought not on all; your unanswerable argument comes to nothing. And in truth, as you have in this paragraph ordered the matter, by being too sparing of your abstract metaphysical reasoning, and employing it by halves, we are fain, after all, to come to the dull way of experience; and must be forced to count, as the parson does his communicants, by his easter-book, how many those are so brought to hear and consider, to know how far God blesses penalties. Indeed, were it to be measured by conforming, the easter-book would be a good register to determine it. But since you put it upon believing, that will be of somewhat a harder disquisition.

To my saying, (upon that place out of Isaiah, vi. 10.
" Make the heart of this people fat, lest they under-
" stand, and convert, and be healed) will all the force
" you can use be a means to make such people hear
" and understand, and be converted?" You reply,
" No,

" No, Sir, it will not. But what then? What if God " declares that he will not heal thoſe who have long " reſiſted all his ordinary methods, and made them- " ſelves, morally ſpeaking, incurable by them? (which " is the utmoſt, you ſay, I can make of the words I " quote.) Will it follow from thence, that no good can " be done by penalties upon others, who are not ſo far " gone in wickedneſs and obſtinacy? If it will not, as " it is evident it will not, to what purpoſe is this ſaid?" It is ſaid to this purpoſe, viz. to ſhow that force ought not to be uſed at all. Thoſe ordinary methods which, reſiſted, are puniſhed with a reprobate ſenſe; are the ordinary methods of inſtruction, without force: as is evident from this place and many others, particularly Romans i. From whence I argue; that what ſtate ſoever you will ſuppoſe men in, either as paſt, or not yet come to the day of grace; no-body can be juſtified in uſing force to work upon them. For till the ordinary methods of inſtruction and perſuaſion can do no more, force is not neceſſary; for you cannot ſay, what other means is there left, and ſo by your own rule not lawful. For till God hath pronounced this ſentence here, on any one, " make his heart fat," &c. the ordinary means of inſtruction and perſuaſion may, by the aſſiſtance of God's grace, prevail. And when this ſentence is once paſſed upon them, and " God will not " afford them his grace to heal them;" (I take it, you confeſs in this place) I am ſure you muſt confeſs, your force to be wholly uſeleſs, and ſo utterly impertinent; unleſs that can be pertinent to be uſed, which you own can do nothing. So that whether it will follow or no, from men's being given up to a reprobate mind, for having reſiſted the preaching of ſalvation, " that no good can " be done by penalties upon others;" this will follow, that not knowing whether preaching may not, by the grace of God, yet work upon them; or whether the day of grace be paſt with them; neither you nor any body elſe can ſay that force is neceſſary; and if it be not neceſſary, you yourſelf tell us it is not to be uſed.

In your next paragraph, you complain of me, as repreſenting your argument, as you ſay, " I commonly

" do, as if you allowed any magiſtrate, of what religion " ſoever, to lay penalties upon all that diſſent from " him." Unhappy magiſtrates that have not your allowance! But to conſole them, I imagine they will find that they are all under the ſame obligation, one as another, to propagate the religion they believe to be the true; whether you allow it them or no. For to go no farther than the firſt words of your argument, which you complain I have miſrepreſented, and which you tell me runs thus, " When men fly from the means of right " information;" I aſk you here, who ſhall be judge of thoſe means of right information; the magiſtrate who joins force with them to make them be hearkened to, or no? When you have anſwered that, you will have reſolved a great part of the queſtion, what magiſtrates are to uſe force?

But that you may not complain again of my miſrepreſenting, I muſt beg my readers leave to ſet down your argument at large in your own words, and all you ſay upon it: " When men fly from the means of a right " information, and will not ſo much as conſider how " reaſonable it is thoroughly and impartially to ex- " amine a religion, which they embraced upon ſuch " inducements as ought to have no ſway at all in the " matter, and therefore with little or no examination " of the proper grounds of it; what human method " can be uſed to bring them to act like men in an affair " of ſuch conſequence, and to make a wiſer and more " rational choice, but that of laying ſuch penalties " upon them, as may balance the weight of thoſe pre- " judices, which inclined them to prefer a falſe way be- " fore the true?" &c. Now this argument, you tell me, I pretend to retort in this manner: " and I ſay, " I ſee no other means left, (taking the world as we " now find it, wherein the magiſtrate never lays penal- " ties for matters of religion upon thoſe of his own " church, nor is it to be expected they ever ſhould) to " make men of the national church, any where, tho- " roughly and impartially examine a religion, which " they embraced upon ſuch inducements as ought to " have no ſway at all in the matter, and therefore with little

" little or no examination of the proper grounds of it:
" and therefore I conclude the use of force by dissenters
" upon conformists necessary. I appeal to all the
" world, whether this be not as just and natural a con-
" clusion as yours?" And you say you are "well content
" the world should judge. And when it determines, that
" there is the same reason to say, that to bring those who
" conform to the national church to examine their re-
" ligion, it is necessary for dissenters (who cannot pos-
" sibly have the coactive power, because the national
" church has that on its side, and cannot be national
" without it) to use force upon conformists; as there
" is to say, that where the national church is the true
" church, there to bring dissenters (as I call them) to
" examine their religion, it is necessary for the magis-
" trate (who has the coactive power) to lay moderate
" penalties upon them for dissenting: you say, when
" the world determines thus, you will never pretend
" any more to judge what is reasonable, in any case
" whatsoever. For you doubt not but you may
" safely presume, that the world will easily admit these
" two things. 1. That though it be very fit and de-
" sirable, that all that are of the true religion, should
" understand the true grounds of it; that so they may
" be the better able both to defend themselves against
" the assaults of seducers, and to reduce such as are out
" of the way; yet this is not strictly necessary to their
" salvation: because experience shows (as far as men
" are capable to judge of such matters) that many do
" heartily believe and profess the true religion, and
" conscientiously practise the duties of it, who yet do
" not understand the true grounds upon which it chal-
" lenges their belief: and no man doubts, but whoso-
" ever does so believe, profess, and practise the true
" religion, if he perseveres to the end, shall certainly
" attain salvation by it. 2. That how much soever it
" concerns those who reject the true religion (whom I
" may call dissenters if I please) to examine and con-
" sider why they do so; and how needful soever penal-
" ties may be to bring them to this; it is, however,
" utterly unreasonable, that such as have not the

" coactive power ſhould take upon them to inflict pe-
" nalties for that purpoſe: becauſe, as that is not con-
" ſiſtent with order and government, which cannot
" ſtand, where private perſons are permitted to uſurp
" the coactive power; ſo there is nothing more mani-
" feſt, than that the prejudice which is done to religion,
" and to the intereſt of men's ſouls, by deſtroying go-
" vernment, does infinitely outweigh any good that can
" poſſibly be done by that which deſtroys it. And
" whoever admits and conſiders theſe things, you ſay,
" you are very ſecure will be far enough from admitting,
" that there is any parity of reaſon in the caſes we here
" ſpeak of, or that mine is as juſt and natural a con-
" cluſion as yours."

The ſum of what you ſay, amounts to thus much: men being apt to take up their religion, upon inducements that ought to have no ſway at all in the matter, and ſo, with little or no examination of the grounds of it; therefore penalties are neceſſary to be laid on them, to make them thoroughly and impartially examine. But yet penalties need not be laid on conformiſts, in England, to make them examine; becauſe they, and you, believe yours to be the true religion: though it muſt be laid on Preſbyterians and Independents, &c. to make them examine, though they believe theirs to be the true religion, becauſe you believe it not to be ſo. But you give another very ſubſtantial reaſon, why penalties cannot be laid on conformiſts, to make them examine; and that is, " becauſe the national church " has the coactive power on its ſide," and therefore they have no need of penalties to make them examine. The national church of France too, has the coactive power on its ſide, and therefore they who are of it have no need of penalties, any of them, to make them examine.

If your argument be good, that men take up their religions upon wrong inducements, and without due examination of the proper grounds of it; and that therefore they have need of penalties to be laid on them to make them examine, as they ought, the grounds of their religion; you muſt confeſs there are ſome in the church

church of England, to whom penalties are neceſſary: unleſs you will affirm, that all, who are in the communion of the church of England, have ſo examined: but that I think you will not do, however you endeavour to palliate their ignorance and negligence in this matter. There being therefore a need of penalties, I ſay, it is as neceſſary that preſbyterians ſhould lay penalties on the conformiſts of the church of England to make them examine, as for the church of England to lay penalties on the preſbyterians to make them do ſo: for they each equally believe their religion to be true; and we ſuppoſe, on both ſides, there are thoſe who have not duly examined. But here you think you have a ſure advantage, by ſaying it is not conſiſtent with the "order of government, and ſo it is impracticable." I eaſily grant it. But is yours more practicable? When you can make your way practicable, for the end for which you pretend it neceſſary, viz. to make "all, who "have taken up their religion upon ſuch inducements "as ought to have no ſway at all in the matter, to "examine thoroughly and impartially the proper "grounds of it;" when, I ſay, you can ſhow your way practicable, to this end, you will have cleared it of one main objection, and convinced the world that yours is a more juſt and natural concluſion than mine.

If your cauſe were capable of any other defence, I ſuppoſe we ſhould not have had ſo long and elaborate an anſwer as you have given us in this paragraph, which at laſt bottoms only on theſe two things: 1. That there are in you, or thoſe of your church, ſome approaches towards infallibility in your belief that your religion is true, which is not to be allowed thoſe of other churches, in the belief of theirs. 2. That it is enough if any one does but conform to it, and remain in the communion of your church: or elſe one would think there ſhould be as much need for conformiſts too of your church to examine the grounds of their religion, as for any others.

"To underſtand the true grounds of the true religion "is not, you ſay, ſtrictly neceſſary to ſalvation." Yet, I think, you will not deny but it is as ſtrictly neceſſary

to salvation, as it is to conform to a national church in all those things it imposes: some whereof are not necessary to salvation; some whereof are acknowledged by all to be indifferent; and some whereof, to some conscientious men, who thereupon decline communion, appear unsound or unlawful. If not being strictly necessary to salvation, will excuse from penalties in the one case, why will it not in the other? And now I shall excuse the world from determining my conclusion to be as natural as yours: for it is pity so reasonable a disputant as you are, should take so desperate a resolution as "never to pretend any more to judge what is reasonable in any case whatsoever."

Whether you have proved that force, used by the magistrate, be a means prescribed by God to procure the gift of faith from him, which is all you say in the next paragraph, others must judge.

In that following, you quote these words of mine: "If all the means God has appointed to make men "hear and consider, be exhortation in season and out "of season, &c. together with prayer for them, and the "example of meekness, and a good life; this is all "ought to be done, whether they will hear, or whether "they will forbear." To which you thus reply, "But "if these be not all the means God has appointed, then "these things are not all that ought to be done." But if I ask you, How do you know that this is not all God has appointed; you have nothing to answer, to bring it to your present purpose, but that you know it by the light of nature. For all you say is but this, that by the light of nature you know force to be useful and necessary to bring men into the way of salvation; by the light of nature you know the magistrate has a commission to use force to that purpose; and by the same light of nature, you know that miracles were appointed to supply the want of force till the magistrates were christians. I imagine, sir, you would scarce have thought this a reasonable answer, if you had taken notice of my words in the same paragraph immediately preceding those you have cited; which, that you may see the scope of my argument, I will here trouble you again; and they are these:

theſe: "It is not for you and me, out of an imagina-
" tion that they may be uſeful, or are neceſſary, to pre-
" ſcribe means in the great and myſterious work of ſal-
" vation, other than what God himſelf has directed.
" God has appointed force as uſeful and neceſſary, and
" therefore it is to be uſed; is a way of arguing be-
" coming the ignorance and humility of poor crea-
" tures. But I think force uſeful or neceſſary, and
" therefore it is to be uſed; has methinks a little too
" much preſumption in it. You aſk what means elſe
" is there left? None, ſay I, to be uſed by man, but
" what God himſelf has directed in the ſcriptures,
" wherein are contained all the means and methods of
" ſalvation. Faith is the gift of God. And we are not
" to uſe any other means to procure this gift to any
" one, but what God himſelf has preſcribed. If he
" has there appointed, that any ſhould be forced to
" hear thoſe who tell them they have miſtaken their
" way, and offer to ſhow them the right; and that they
" ſhould be puniſhed by the magiſtrate, if they did not;
" it will be paſt doubt, it is to be made uſe of. But
" till that can be done, it will be in vain to ſay, what
" other means is there left."

My argument here lies plainly in this: That all the means and methods of ſalvation are contained in the ſcripture: which either you were to have denied, or elſe have ſhown where it was in ſcripture, that force was appointed. But inſtead of that, you tell us, that God appointed miracles in the beginning of the goſpel. And though, when theſe ceaſed, the means I mention were all the miniſters had left, yet this proves not that the magiſtrate was not to uſe force. Your words are, " As to the firſt ſpreaders of the goſpel, it has already
" been ſhown, that God appointed other means be-
" ſides theſe for them to uſe, to induce men to hear and
" conſider: and though, when thoſe extraordinary
" means ceaſed, theſe means which I mention (viz.
" preaching, &c.) were the only means left to the mi-
" niſters of the goſpel; yet that is no proof that the
" magiſtrate, when he became chriſtian, could not
" lawfully uſe ſuch means as his ſtation enabled him to

" uſe, when they became needful." I ſaid, in expreſs words, " No means was to be uſed by man, but what " God himſelf has directed in the ſcripture." And you anſwer, This is no proof that the chriſtian magiſtrate may not uſe force. Perhaps when they ſo peremptorily interpoſe their deciſive decrees in the buſineſs of ſalvation, eſtabliſh religions by laws and penalties, with what articles, creeds, ceremonies, and diſcipline, they think fit; (for this we ſee done almoſt in all countries) when they force men to hear thoſe, and thoſe only, who by their authority are choſen and allowed to tell men they have miſtaken their way, and offer to ſhow them the right; it may be thought neceſſary to prove magiſtrates to be men. If that needs no proof, what I ſaid needs ſome other anſwer.

But let us examine a little the parts of what you here ſay: " As to the firſt ſpreaders of the goſpel, ſay you, " it has already been ſhown, that God appointed other " means beſides exhortation in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon, " prayer, and the example of a good life; for them to " uſe to induce men to hear and conſider." What were thoſe other means? To that you anſwer readily, miracles. Ergo, men are directed now by ſcripture to uſe miracles. Or elſe what anſwer do you make to my argument, which I gave you in theſe words, " No " means is to be uſed by man, but what God himſelf " has directed in the ſcriptures, wherein are contained " all the means and methods of ſalvation." No, they cannot uſe miracles now as a means, ſay you, for they have them not. What then? Therefore the magiſtrate, who has it, muſt uſe force to ſupply the want of thoſe extraordinary means which are now ceaſed. This indeed is an inference of yours, but not of the ſcriptures. Does the ſcripture ſay any thing of this? Not a word; not ſo much as the leaſt intimation towards it in all the New Teſtament. Be it then true or falſe, that force is a means to be uſed by men in the abſence of miracles; this is yet no anſwer to my argument; this is no proof that it is appointed in ſcripture; which is the thing my argument turns on.

Revela-

Revelation then fails you. Let us see now how reason and common sense, that common light of nature, will help you out.

You then reason thus: bare preaching, &c. will not prevail on men to hear and consider; and therefore some other means is necessary to make them do so. Pray what do you mean by men, or any other of those indefinite terms, you have always used in this case? Is it that bare preaching will prevail on no men? Does reason, (under which I comprehend experience too, and all the ways of knowledge, contra-distinguished to revelation) discover any such thing to you? I imagine you will not say that; or pretend that no-body was ever brought, by preaching or persuasion, to hear and consider the truths of the gospel, (mean by considering what you will) without other means used by those who applied themselves to the care of converting them. To such therefore as may be brought to hear and consider, without other means, you will not say that other means are necessary.

In the next place, therefore, When you say bare preaching will not prevail on men, do you mean that it will not prevail on all men, and therefore it is necessary that men should use other means? Neither, I think, will reason authorize you to draw such a consequence: because neither will preaching alone, nor preaching assisted with force, or any other means man can use, prevail on all men. And therefore no other means can be pretended to be necessary to be used by man, to do what men by those means never did, nor ever can do.

That some men shall be saved, and not all, is, I think, past question to all that are christians: and those that shall be saved, it is plain, are the elect. If you think not this plain enough in scripture, I desire you to turn to the seventeenth of the XXXIX articles of the church of England, where you will read these words: "Predestination to life is the everlasting purpose of God, "whereby (before the foundations of the world were "laid) he hath constantly decreed by his counsel secret "to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom "he has chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring "them

" them by Chriſt to everlaſting ſalvation, as veſſels " made to honour. Wherefore they which be indued " with ſo excellent a benefit of God, be called accord- " ing to God's purpoſe by his ſpirit working in due ſea- " ſon: they through grace obey the calling; they be " juſtified freely; they be made ſons of God by adop- " tion; they be made like the image of his only be- " gotten Son Jeſus Chriſt; they walk religiouſly in " good works; and at length, by God's mercy, they " attain to everlaſting felicity." Now pray tell me whether bare preaching will not prevail on all the elect to hear and conſider without other means to be uſed by men. If you ſay it will; the neceſſity of your other means, I think, is out of doors. If you ſay it will not; I deſire you to tell me how you do know it without revelation? And whether by your own reaſon you can tell us, whether any, and what means God has made neceſſary, beſides what he has appointed in ſcripture for the calling his elect? When you can do this, we ſhall think you no ordinary divine, nor a ſtranger to the ſecret counſels of the infinitely wiſe God. But till then, your mixing your opinion with the divine wiſdom in the great work of ſalvation, and, from arguments of congruity, taking upon you to declare the neceſſity or uſefulneſs of means, which God has not expreſsly directed, for the gathering in of his elect; will ſcarce authorize the magiſtrate to uſe his coactive power for the edifying and completing the body of Chriſt, which is his church. " Thoſe whom God hath choſen " in Chriſt out of mankind, before the foundations of " the world, are called, according to God's purpoſe, " by his ſpirit, working in due ſeaſon, and through " grace obey the calling;" ſay you in your article. The outward means that God has appointed for this, is preaching. Ay, but preaching is not enough; that is, is not ſufficient means, ſay you. And I aſk you how you know it; ſince the ſcripture, which declares all that we can know in this matter, ſays nothing of the inſufficiency of it, or of the neceſſity of any other? Nor can there be a neceſſity of any other means than what God expreſsly appoints, in a matter wherein no means can operate effectually,

fectually, without the aſſiſtance of his grace; and where the aſſiſtance of his grace can make any outward means, he appoints effectual.

I muſt deſire you here to take notice, that by preaching which I uſe for ſhortneſs, I mean exhortation, inſtruction, intreaty, praying for; and, in fine, any outward means of perſuaſion in the power of man, ſeparate from force.

You tell us here, "as to the firſt ſpreaders of the "goſpel, God appointed other means, viz. miracles, "for them to uſe to induce men to hear and conſider." If by the firſt ſpreaders of the goſpel, you mean the twelve apoſtles and ſeventy diſciples, whom Chriſt himſelf ſent to preach the goſpel; they indeed were appointed, by his immediate command, to ſhow miracles by the power which he had beſtowed upon them. But will you ſay, all the miniſters and preachers of the goſpel had ſuch a commiſſion, and ſuch a power, all along from the apoſtles time; and that they, every one, did actually ſhow miracles, to induce men to hear and conſider, quite down till chriſtianity was ſupported by the law of the empire? Unleſs you could ſhow this, though you could produce ſome well-atteſted miracles, done by ſome men in every age till that time; yet it would not be ſufficient to prove that miracles were appointed to be conſtantly uſed to induce men to hear and conſider; and ſo by your reaſoning, to ſupply the want of force, till that neceſſary aſſiſtance could be had from the authority of the magiſtrate become chriſtian. For ſince it is what you build upon, that men will not hear and conſider upon bare preaching; and I think you will forwardly enough agree, that till chriſtianity was made the religion of the empire, there were thoſe every-where that heard the preachers of it ſo little, or ſo little conſidered what they ſaid, that they rejected the goſpel; and that therefore miracles or force are neceſſary means to make men hear and conſider; you muſt own that thoſe who preached without the power of miracles, or the coactive power of the magiſtrate accompanying them, were unfurniſhed of competent and ſufficient means to make men hear and conſider; and ſo to bring them to the

the true religion. If you will ſay the miracles done by others were enough to accompany their preaching, to make it be heard and conſidered; the preaching of the miniſters at this day is ſo accompanied, and ſo will need no aſſiſtance of force from the magiſtrate. If the report of miracles done by one miniſter of the goſpel ſome time before, and in another place, were ſufficient to make the preaching of ten or a thouſand others be heard and conſidered; why is it not ſo now? For the credibility and atteſtation of the report is all that is of moment, when miracles done by others, in other places, are the argument that prevails. But this, I fear, will not ſerve your turn in the buſineſs of penalties; and, whatever might ſatisfy you in the caſe of miracles, I doubt you would not think the ſalvation of ſouls ſufficiently provided for, if the report of the force of penalties, uſed ſome time ſince on one ſide of the Tweed, were all that ſhould aſſiſt the preachers of the true religion on the other, to make men hear and conſider.

St. Paul, in his epiſtle to Titus, inſtructs him what he, and the preſbyters he ſhould ordain in the cities of Crete, were to do for the propagating of the goſpel, and bringing men heartily to embrace it. His directions are, that they ſhould be "blameleſs, not rioters, not "ſelf-willed, not ſoon angry, not given to wine or filthy "lucre, not ſtrikers, not unruly; lovers of hoſpitality, "and of good men; ſober, juſt, holy, temperate; to "be able by ſound doctrine both to exhort and con-"vince gainſayers; in all things to be a pattern of good "works; in doctrine ſhowing uncorruptedneſs, gra-"vity, ſincerity, ſound ſpeech that cannot be con-"demned, that he that is of the contrary part may be "aſhamed, having no evil to ſay of you. Theſe things "ſpeak, and exhort, and rebuke, with all authority. "Avoid fooliſh queſtions, and genealogies, and con-"tentions. A man that is an heretic, after the firſt "and ſecond admonition, reject." To repay you the favour of your greek, it is παραιτῆ; which, if I may take your liberty of receding from our tranſlation, I would read "avoid."

The

The cretans, by the account St. Paul gives of them, were a people that would require all the means that were needful to prevail with any ſtrangers to the goſpel to hear and conſider. But yet we find nothing directed for the ſupport and propagation of the goſpel in this iſland, but preaching, exhortation, reproof, &c. with the example of a good life. In all this epiſtle, writ on purpoſe to inſtruct the preachers of the goſpel, in the means they were to uſe among the cretans, for their converſion, not a word about miracles, their power or uſe: which one would think ſtrange, if they were the means appointed, and neceſſary to make men hear and conſider, and without which they would not do it. Preaching, admonition, exhortation, intreaties, inſtruction, by the common light of reaſon, were known, and natural to be uſed, to perſuade men. There needed not much be ſaid to convince men of it. But, if miracles were a neceſſary means, it was a means wholly new, unexpected, and out of the power of other teachers. And therefore one would think, if they were appointed for the ends you propoſe, one ſhould hear ſomething of that appointment: ſince that they were to be uſed; or how, and when; was farther from common apprehenſion, and ſeems to need ſome particular direction.

If you ſay the ſame ſpirit that gave them the power of miracles, would alſo give them the knowledge both that they had it, and how to uſe it; I am far enough from limiting the operations of that infinitely wiſe ſpirit, who will not fail to bring all the elect of God into the obedience of truth, by thoſe means, and in that manner he ſhall think neceſſary. But yet our Saviour, when he ſent abroad his diſciples, with the power of miracles, not only put it in their commiſſion, whereby they were informed that they had that extraordinary gift, but added inſtructions to them in the uſe of it: "Freely you have received, freely give;" a caution as neceſſary to the cretan elders, in the uſe of miracles, if they had that power; there being nothing more liable to be turned to the advantage of filthy lucre.

I do not queſtion but the ſpirit of God might give the power, and ſtir up the mind of the firſt ſpreaders of the

the gospel to do miracles on some extraordinary occasion. But if they were a necessary means to make men hear and consider what was preached to them, till force supplied their place, and so were ordinarily to accompany the preaching of the gospel, unless it should be preached without the means appointed and necessary to make it prevail; I think in that case, we may expect it should expressly have made a part of the preacher's commission; it making a necessary part of the effectual execution of his function.

But the apostle, it seems, thought fit to lay the stress upon instructing others, and living well themselves; upon "being instant in season, and out of season;" and therefore directs all his advices for the ordering the cretan church, and the propagating the gospel there, to make them attend to those necessary things of life and doctrine, without so much as mentioning the appointment, need, or use of miracles.

I said, "But whatever neglect or aversion there is in "some men, impartially and thoroughly to be instruc- "ted; there will, upon a due examination, I fear, be "found no less a neglect and aversion in others, im- "partially and thoroughly to instruct them. It is not "the talking even general truths in plain and clear "language; much less a man's own fancies in scholas- "tical or uncommon ways of speaking, an hour or two, "once a week, in publick; that is enough to instruct "even willing hearers in the way of salvation, and the "grounds of their religion:" and that politic discourses and invectives from the pulpit, instead of friendly and christian debates with people at their houses, were not the proper means to inform men in the foundations of religion; and that if there were not a neglect in this part, I thought there would be little need of any other means. To this you tell me, in the next paragraph, "you do not see how pertinent my dis- "course, about this matter, is to the present ques- "tion." If the showing the neglects, observable in the use of what is agreed to be necessary means, will not be allowed by you to be pertinent, in a debate about necessary means; when possibly those very neglects may serve

ſerve to make other means ſeem requiſite, which really are not ſo; yet if you are not of thoſe who will never think any ſuch diſcourſe pertinent; you will allow me to mind you of it again, as not impertinent in anſwer to your laſt letter, wherein you ſo often tell us of the ſufficient proviſion made for inſtruction. For wherever the neglect be, it can ſcarce be ſaid there is ſufficient proviſion made for inſtruction in a chriſtian country, where great numbers of thoſe, who are in the communion of the national church, are groſsly ignorant of the grounds of the chriſtian religion. And I aſk you, whether it be in reſpect of ſuch conformiſts you ſay, as you do in the ſame paragraph, that "when the beſt provi-"ſion is made that can be, for the inſtruction of the "people, you fear a great part of them will ſtill need "ſome moderate penalties to bring them to hear and "receive inſtruction?"

But what if all the means that can, be not uſed for their inſtruction? That there are neglects of this kind, you will, I ſuppoſe, take the word of a reverend prelate of our church, who thought he could not better ſhow his good-will to the clergy, than by a ſeaſonable diſcourſe of the paſtoral care, to cure that neglect for the future. There he tells you, p. 115, 118, that "miniſters ſhould "watch over and feed their flock, and not enjoy their "benefices as farms, &c. Which reproach, ſays he, "whatever we may be, our church is free of; which "he proves by the ſtipulation and covenant they make "with Chriſt, that they will never ceaſe their labour, "care, and diligence, till they have done all that lieth "in them, according to their bounden duty; towards "all ſuch as are, or ſhould be committed to their care, "to bring them to a ripeneſs of age in Chriſt." And a page or two after, having repeated part of the promiſe by thoſe who take orders, he adds. "In this is "expreſſed the ſo much NEGLECTED, but ſo neceſſary "duty, which incumbents owe their flock in a private "way; viſiting, inſtructing, and admoniſhing; which "is one of the moſt uſeful and important parts of their "duty, how generally ſoever it may be diſuſed or for-"gotten. P. 187, he ſays, every prieſt that minds his "duty

" duty will find, that no part of it is so useful as cate-
" chistical discourses; by means whereof, his people
" will understand all his sermons the better, when they
" have once a clear notion of all those terms that must
" run through them; for those not being understood,
" renders them all unintelligible. Another part of the
" priest's duty, he tells you, p. 201, is with relation to
" them that are without, who are of the side of the church
" of Rome, or among the dissenters. Other churches and
" bodies are noted for their zeal in making proselytes;
" for their restless endeavours, as well as their unlawful
" methods in it: they reckoning perhaps that all will
" be sanctified by the increasing their PARTY; which
" is the true name of making converts; except they be-
" come at the same time good men as well as votaries
" to a side or cause. We are certainly very REMISS in
" this of both hands. Little pains is taken to gain
" either upon papists or nonconformists: the LAW HAS
" BEEN SO MUCH TRUSTED TO, that that method only
" was thought sure; it was much valued, and others
" at the same time was much NEGLECTED. And where-
" as, at first, WITHOUT FORCE OR VIOLENCE, in forty
" years time, popery, from being the prevailing reli-
" gion, was reduced to a handful: we have now, in
" above twice that number of years, made very little
" progress," &c.

Perhaps here again you will tell me, you "do not " see how this is pertinent to the present question;" which, that you may see, give me leave to put you in mind, that neither you, nor any body else, can pretend force necessary, till all the means of persuasion have been used; and nothing neglected that can be done by all the softer ways of application. And since it is your own doctrine, that force is not lawful, unless where it is necessary; the magistrate, upon your principles, can neither lawfully use force, nor the ministers of any national church plead for it any where, but where they themselves have first done their duties: a draught whereof, adapted to our present circumstances, we have in the newly published discourse of the pastoral care. And he that shall press the use of force as necessary, before he

can

can anſwer it to himſelf and the world, that thoſe who have taken on them the care of ſouls have performed their duties; were beſt conſider, whether he does not draw up an accuſation againſt the men of that holy order; or againſt the magiſtrate who ſuffers them to neglect any part of their duty. For whilſt what that learned biſhop, in the paſſages above-cited, and in other places, mentions, is neglected; it cannot be ſaid, that no other means but force is left; thoſe, which are on all hands acknowledged neceſſary and uſeful means, not having yet been made uſe of.

To vindicate your method from novelty, you tell me, it is as old as St. Auſtin. Whatever he ſays in the place you quote, it ſhows only his opinion; but not that it was ever uſed. Therefore, to ſhow it not to be new in practice, you add, that you "think it has been made "uſe of by all thoſe magiſtrates, who having made all "requiſite proviſions for the inſtructing their people "in the truth, have likewiſe required them under con-"venient penalties to embrace it." Which is as much as to ſay, that thoſe magiſtrates who uſed your method did uſe your method. And that certainly you may think ſafely, and without fear of being gainſaid.

But now I will tell you what I think, in my turn: and that is, if you could have found any magiſtrates who had made uſe of your method, as well as you think you have found a divine that approves of it; you would have named thoſe magiſtrates as forwardly as you do St. Auſtin. If I think amiſs, pray correct me yet, and name them.

That which makes me imagine you will hardly find any examples of it, is what I there ſaid in theſe words; "All other law-makers have conſtantly taken this me-"thod; that where any thing was to be amended, the "fault was firſt declared, and then penalties denounced "againſt all thoſe, who after a time ſet, ſhould be "found guilty of it. This the common ſenſe of man-"kind, and the very reaſon of laws, (which are intend-"ed not for puniſhment, but correction;) has made "ſo plain, that the ſubtileſt and moſt refined law-"makers have not gone out of this courſe, nor have the

" moſt ignorant and barbarous nations miſſed it. But " you have outdone Solon and Lycurgus, Moſes and " our Saviour; and are reſolved to be a law-maker of a " way by yourſelf. It is an old and obſolete way, and " will not ſerve your turn, to begin with warnings and " threats of penalties, to be inflicted on thoſe who do " not reform, but continue to do that which you think " they fail in. To allow of impunity to the innocent, " or the opportunity of amendment to thoſe who would " avoid the penalties, are formalities not worth your " notice. You are for a ſhorter and ſurer way. Take " a whole tribe, and puniſh them at all adventures, " whether guilty or no of the miſcarriage which you " would have amended; or without ſo much as telling " them what it is you would have them do, but leaving " them to find it out if they can. All theſe abſurdities " are contained in your way of proceeding, and are im- " poſſible to be avoided by any one, who will puniſh " diſſenters, and only diſſenters, to make them conſider " and weigh the grounds of their religion, and impar- " tially examine whether it be true or no; and upon " what grounds they took it up; that ſo they may find " and embrace the truth that muſt ſave them." Theſe abſurdities, I fear, muſt be removed, before any magiſtrates will find your method practicable.

I having ſaid, " Your method is not altogether un- " like the plea made uſe of to excuſe the late barbarous " uſage of the proteſtants in France, from being a per- " ſecution for religion, viz. That it was not a puniſh- " ment for religion but for diſobeying the king's laws, " which required them to come to maſs: ſo by your " rule diſſenters muſt be puniſhed, not for the religion " they have embraced, but the religion they have re- " jected." In anſwer to this, in the next paragraph, you take abundance of pains to prove, that the king of France's laws, that require going to maſs, are no laws. You were beſt to ſay ſo on the other ſide of the water. It is ſure the puniſhments were puniſhments, and the dragooning was dragooning. And if you think that plea excuſed them not, I am of your mind. But nevertheleſs am of opinion, as I was, that it will prove as good

a plea

a plea as yours; which is what you argue againſt in your next paragraph, in the words following, wherein you examine the likeneſs of your new method to this plea. You tell me, "I ſay, by your rule, the diſſenters "(from the true religion, for you ſpeak of no other) "muſt be puniſhed (or, if I pleaſe, ſubjected to mode- "rate penalties, ſuch as ſhall make them uneaſy, but "neither deſtroy or undo them:) for what?" Indeed I thought by your firſt book you meant not for their religion, but to make them conſider; but here you aſk me "where it is you ſay that diſſenters from the true "religion are not to be puniſhed for their religion? So "then, it ſeems in your opinion now, diſſenters from "the true religion are to be puniſhed," or, as you are pleaſed to mollify the expreſſion, for the thing is the ſame, "ſubjected to moderate penalties for their re- "ligion." I think I ſhall not need to prove, to any one but one of your nice ſtyle, that the execution of penal laws, let the penalties be great or ſmall, are puniſhments.

If therefore the religion of diſſenters from the true, be a fault to be puniſhed by the magiſtrate; who is to judge who are guilty of that fault? Muſt it be the magiſtrate every-where; or the magiſtrate in ſome countries, and not in others; or the magiſtrate no-where? If the magiſtrate no-where is to be judge who are diſſenters from the true religion, he can no-where puniſh them. If he be to be every-where judge; then the king of France, or the great turk, muſt puniſh thoſe whom they judge diſſenters from the true religion, as well as other potentates. If ſome magiſtrates have a right to judge, and others not: That yet, I fear, how abſurd ſoever it be, ſhould I grant it, will not do your buſineſs. For beſides that, they will hardly agree to make you their infallible umpire in the caſe, to determine who of them have, and who have not this right to judge which is the true religion; or if they ſhould, and you ſhould declare the king of England had that right; viz. whilſt he complied to ſupport the orthodoxy, eccleſiaſtical polity, and thoſe ceremonies which you approve of; but that the king of France, and the great turk, had it

not; and so could have no right to use force on those they judged dissenters from the true religion; you ought to bethink yourself what you will reply to one that should use your own words: " If such a degree " of outward force, as has been mentioned, be really of " great and even necessary use, for the advancing of the " true religion, and salvation of souls; then it must be " acknowledged, that in France and Turky, &c. there " is a right somewhere to use it, for the advancing those " ends; unless we will say (what without impiety can- " not be said) that the wise and benign Disposer and " Governor of all things, has not in France and Turky " furnished mankind with competent means for the " promoting his own honour, and the good of souls."

You go on, and tell us, they are to be punished, not for following the light of their own reason, nor for obeying the dictates of their own consciences, " but " rather for the contrary. For the light of their own " reason and the dictates of their own conscience (if " their reason and their consciences were not perverted " and abused) would undoubtedly lead them to the " same thing, to which the method you speak of is de- " signed to bring them;" i. e. to the same thing to which your reason and your conscience leads you. For if you were to argue with a papist, or a presbyterian, in the case, what privilege have you to tell him, that his reason and conscience is perverted, more than he has to tell you that yours is so? Unless it be this insupportable presumption, that your reason and conscience ought to be the measure of all reason and conscience in all others; which how you can claim without pretending to infallibility, is not easy to discern.

The diversion you give yourself about the likeness and unlikeness of two pleas, I shall not trouble myself with; since, when your fit of mirth was over, you were forced to confess, That " as I have made your plea for " you; you think there is no considerable difference, as " to the fairness of them; excepting what arises from " the different degrees of punishment, in the french " discipline, and your method. But if the french " plea be not true; and that which I make to be yours,

" be not yours;"—I muſt beg your pardon, Sir, I did not think it was your opinion, nor do I yet remember that you any where ſaid in your "Argument," &c. that men were to be puniſhed for their religion; but that it was purely to make men "examine the religion "they had embraced, and the religion that they had re-"jected." And if that were of moment, I ſhould think myſelf ſufficiently juſtified for this my miſtake, by what you ſay in your "Argument," &c. from p. 6 to 12. But ſince you explain yourſelf otherwiſe here, I am not unwilling to take your hypotheſis, as you from time to time ſhall pleaſe to reform it. You anſwer then, that "to make them examine, is indeed the next end for "which they are to be puniſhed." But what is that to my queſtion? Which, if it be pertinent, demands for what fault, not for what end, they are to be puniſhed: as appears even by my next words. "So that they are "puniſhed, not for having offended againſt a law, i. e. "not for any fault; for there is no law in England that "requires them to examine." This, I muſt confeſs, was to ſhow, that here, as in France, whatever was pretended, yet the true reaſon why people were puniſhed, was their religion. And it was for this agreement, that in both places religion was meant, though ſomething elſe was talked of, that I ſaid your plea was like that made uſe of in France. But I ſee I might have ſpared my pains to prove that you puniſh diſſenters for their religion, ſince you here own it.

You tell me, in the ſame place, I was impertinent in my queſtion; which was this, "For what then are they "to be puniſhed?" that I demanded for what end, and not for what fault they are to be puniſhed. In good earneſt, Sir, I was not ſo ſubtile as to diſtinguiſh them. I always thought that the end of all laws was to amend thoſe faults which were forbidden; and that when any one was puniſhed, the fault for which he was puniſhed, was the tranſgreſſion of the law, in that particular which was by the law commanded or forbidden; and the end of the puniſhment, was the amendment of that fault for the future. For example; if the law commanded to hear, not hearing was the fault puniſhed; and

the end of that punishment, was to make the offenders hear. If the law commanded to examine, the fault punished, when that law was put in execution, was not examining: and the end of the punishment, to make the offenders examine. If the law commanded conformity, the fault was nonconformity, and the end of it to make men conform.

This was my apprehension concerning laws, and ends of punishments. And I must own myself still so dull as not to distinguish otherwise between "the fault for "which men are to be punished, and the end for which "they are to be punished;" but only as the one is past, the other future. The transgression, or fault, is an omission or action that a man is already guilty of; the end of the punishment, that it be not again repeated. So that if a man be punished for the religion he professes, I can see no other end for which he is punished, but to make him quit that religion. No other immediate end I mean; for other remote ends, to which this is subordinate, it may have. So that if not examining the religion which men have embraced; and the religion they have rejected; be not the fault for which men are punished; I would be glad you would show me how it can be the next end, as you say it is, of their being punished. And that you may not think my dulness gives you a labour without ground, I will tell you the reason why I cannot find any other next end of punishment, but the amendment of the fault forbidden; and that is, because that seems to me to be the end, the next end, of any action; which, when obtained, the action is to cease; and not cease till it be attained. And thus, I think, it is in punishments ordained by the law. When the fault forbidden is amended, the punishment is to cease; and not till then. This is the only way I have to know the end, or final cause for which any action is done. If you have any other, you will do me a kindness to instruct me. This it is which makes me conclude, (and I think with me all those who have not had the leisure and happiness to attain the utmost refining of the schools) that if their religion be the fault for which differenters are punished, examining is not the end

for

for which they are punished, but the change of their religion: though examining may, perhaps, in some men, precede their change, and help to it. But that is not necessary. A man may change his religion without it: and when he has changed, let the motive be what it will, the end the law aims at is obtained, and the punishment ceases. So on the other side, if not hearing, not examining, be the fault for which men are punished; conformity is not the next end for which they are punished, though it may perhaps, in some, be a consequence of it; but hearing and examining must be understood to be the ends for which they are punished. If they are not the ends, why does the punishment cease, when those ends are attained? And thus you have my thoughts concerning this matter, which perhaps will not be very pertinent, as mine have not the good luck always to be to you; to a man of nicer distinctions.

But let us consider your hypothesis as it now stands, and see what advantage you have got to your cause by this new explication. "Dissenters from the true religion are to be punished, say you, for their religion." Why? Because it is a fault. Against whom? Against God. Thence it follows indeed, that God, if he pleases, may punish it. But how will you prove that God has given the magistrates of the earth a power to punish all faults against himself? Covetousness, or not loving our neighbour as ourselves, are faults or sins against God. Ought the magistrate to punish these? But I shall not need to trouble you much with that question. This matter, I think, will be decided between us without going so far.

If the magistrate may punish any one for not being of the true religion, must the magistrate judge what is that true religion, or no? If he must not, what must guide him in the punishing of some, and not of others? For so it is in all places where there is a national religion established by penal laws. If the magistrate be commissioned by the same law of nature (for that is all the commission you pretend to) to judge what is the true religion, by which he is authorized to punish those who dissent from it; must not all magistrates judge, and

accordingly punish those who dissent from that, which they judge the true religion, i. e. in effect, those who dissent from theirs? And if all magistrates have a power to punish those who are not of their religion; I ask you, whether it be of more use or disadvantage to the promoting true religion, and salvation of souls? And when you have resolved that question, you will then be able to tell me, whether the usefulness of it, which must be determined by the greater good or harm it is like to do, is such as to justify your doctrine about it, or the magistrate's use of it.

Besides, your making the dissenting from the true religion a fault to be punished by the magistrate, puts an end to your pretence to moderate punishments; which, in this place, you make use of to distinguish yours from the french method; saying, that "your "method punishes men with punishments which do "not deserve to be called so, when compared with "those of the french discipline." But if the dissenting from the true religion be a fault that the magistrate is to punish, and a fault of that consequence, that it draws with it the loss of a man's soul; I do not see how other magistrates, whose duty it is to punish faults under their cognizance, and by punishing to amend them; can be more remiss than the king of France has been, and forbear declaring that they will have all their people saved, and endeavour by such ways as he has done to effect it: especially since you tell us, that "God now "leaves religion to the care of men, under his ordinary "providence, to try whether they will do their duties "in their several capacities or not, leaving them an-"swerable for all that may follow from their neglect." In the correcting of faults, "malo nodo malus cuneus," is not only what is justifiable, but what is requisite. But of this more fully in another place.

In the next place, I do not see how, by your method, as you explain it here, the magistrate can punish any one for not being of the true religion, though we should grant him to have a power to do it; whilst you tell us, that "your method punishes men for rejecting the true "religion, proposed to them with sufficient evidence; "which

" which certainly is a fault." By this part of your ſcheme it is plain, that you allow the magiſtrate to puniſh none but thoſe to whom the true religion is propoſed with ſufficient evidence; and ſufficient evidence, you tell us, " is ſuch as will certainly win aſſent where-" ever it is duly conſidered." Now by this rule there will be very few that the magiſtrate will have a right to puniſh; ſince he cannot know whether thoſe who diſſent, do it for want of due conſideration in them, or want of ſufficient evidence in what is propoſed; unleſs you mean by due conſideration, ſuch conſideration that always does bring men actually to aſſent; which is in effect to ſay nothing at all. For then your rule amounts to thus much, " that ſufficient evidence is ſuch as will " certainly win aſſent wherever it is conſidered duly," i. e. ſo as to win aſſent. This being like ſome of thoſe other rules we have met with, and ending in a circle; which after you have traced, you at laſt find yourſelf juſt where you were at ſetting out; I leave it to you to own as you think fit: and tell you, if by duly conſidering, you mean conſidering to his utmoſt; that then, that which is propoſed to one with ſufficient evidence to win aſſent, may not be ſo to another.

There are propoſitions extant in geometry, with their demonſtrations annexed; and that with ſuch ſufficient evidence to ſome men of deep thought and penetration, as to make them ſee the demonſtration, and give aſſent to the truth: whilſt there are many others, and thoſe no novices in mathematics, who, with all the conſideration and attention they can uſe, are never able to attain unto it. It is ſo in other parts of truth. That which hath evidence enough to make one man certain, has not enough to make another ſo much as gueſs it to be true; though he has ſpared no endeavour or application in examining it. And therefore, if the magiſtrate be to puniſh none but thoſe who reject the true religion, when it has been offered with ſufficient evidence; I imagine he will not have many to puniſh, if he will, as he ought, diſtinguiſh between the innocent and the guilty.

Upon

Upon your forwardneſs to encourage the magiſtrate's uſe of force in matters of religion, by its uſefulneſs; even ſo far as to pretend advantages from what yourſelf acknowledge the miſapplication of it; I ſay that "So "inſtead of diſheartening from, you give encourage- "ment to the miſchief; which upon your principle, "joined to the natural thirſt in man after arbitrary "power; may be carried to all manner of exorbitancy, "with ſome pretence of right." To which your reply is, That you "ſpeak no-where but of the uſe and ne- "ceſſity of force." What think you in the place mentioned, of the gain that you tell the ſufferers they ſhall make by the magiſtrate's puniſhing them to bring them to a wrong religion? You do not, as I remember, there ſay, that force is neceſſary in that caſe; though they gaining, as you ſay, by it this advantage, "that they "know better than they did before, where the truth "does lie," you cannot but allow, that ſuch a miſapplication of force "may do ſome ſervice, indirectly and "at a diſtance, towards the ſalvation of ſouls."

But that you may not think, whilſt I had under conſideration the dangerous encouragement you gave to men in power, to be very buſy with their force in matters of religion; by all the ſorts of uſefulneſs you could imagine of it, however applied, right or wrong; that I declined mentioning the neceſſity you pretend of force, becauſe it would not as well ſerve to the purpoſe for which I mention its uſefulneſs; I ſhall here take it ſo, that the reader may ſee what reaſon you had to complain of my not doing it before.

Thus then ſtands your ſyſtem: "The procuring and "advancing any way of the ſpiritual and eternal intereſts "of men, is one of the ends of civil ſociety." And force is put into the magiſtrate's hands, as neceſſary for the attaining thoſe ends, where no other means are left, "Who then upon your grounds may quickly find rea- "ſon, where it ſuits his inclination, or ſerves his turn, "to puniſh men directly to bring them to his religion." For if he may uſe force becauſe it is neceſſary, as being the only means left to make men conſider thoſe reaſons

and

and arguments, which otherwiſe they would not conſider; why may he not by the ſame rule uſe force, as the only means left to procure men degrees of glory, which otherwiſe they would not attain; and ſo to advance their eternal intereſts? For St. Paul aſſures us, that "the "afflictions of this life work for us a far more exceed- "ing weight of glory." So that whether the magiſtrate may not, when it may ſerve his turn, argue thus from your principles, judge you: diſſenters from my religion muſt be puniſhed, if in the wrong, to bring them into the right way; if in the right, to make them by their ſufferings gainers of a far more exceeding weight of glory.

But you ſay, "unleſs it be as neceſſary for men to at- "tain any greater degree of glory, as it is to attain "glory, it will not follow, that if the magiſtrate may "uſe force, becauſe it may be indirectly, &c. uſeful "towards the procuring any degree of glory, he may "by the ſame rule uſe it where it may be in that man- "ner uſeful towards the procuring a greater degree of "glory. But that there is the ſame neceſſity of men's "attaining a greater degree of glory, as there is of their "attaining glory, no man will affirm. For without "attaining glory, they cannot eſcape the damnation "of hell; which yet they may eſcape, without any "greater degree of glory." One of the ends of a commonwealth is, ſay you, the advancing men's eternal intereſts. The procuring greater degrees of glory, is the advancing a man's eternal intereſt. The uſe of force to make men ſuffer for the truth, what otherwiſe they would not ſuffer, is as neceſſary for the attaining a higher degree of glory, as uſing force to make men conſider, what otherwiſe they would not conſider, is neceſſary for the attaining any degree of glory. But you will ſay, "Attaining glory is abſolutely neceſſary, but the at- "taining any greater degree of glory, however deſirable, "is not ſo neceſſary. Now if there be not the ſame "neceſſity of the one of theſe, as there is of the other; "there can be no pretence to ſay, that whatever is law- "ful in reſpect of one of them, is likewiſe ſo in reſpect "of the other." But there will always be a juſt pre-

tence

tence to say, if advancing the eternal interests of men be one of the ends of a commonwealth, and that the force in the magistrate's hands be necessary to the attaining that end; that then the magistrate is obliged to use it; whether you will think that end absolutely necessary, or as necessary as another, or no. I shall not here trouble you again with your mistake about what is absolutely necessary; having taken notice of it in another place. Only I shall desire you to show me, that the attaining of glory is absolutely necessary, when next time you have occasion to affirm it. Attaining of glory is necessary in order to happiness: and attaining a greater degree of glory, is necessary in order to greater happiness: but neither of them is absolutely necessary, but in order to their respective ends.

And now, though as you say, "you do not think "yourself bound to take notice of all that may be done "with some pretence of right:" yet, I suppose, upon cooler thoughts, when you have considered of what dangerous consequence an argument, managed as yours is, may be to the true religion, and the sincere professors of it; and what occasion or encouragement it may give to men in power warmed with zeal, and excited by the proper ministers of their own religion, to make a wrong and exorbitant use of force in matters of religion; you will another time think yourself bound not to let it go abroad again without some caution to the magistrate in the use of it; without one word of advice at least, that since it is given him, as you say, only for promoting the true religion, he should take care, and examine impartially whether what he employs it for, be the one only true religion. It being your opinion, whenever he makes use of force in matters of religion, for the promoting any thing but that, he goes beyond his commission; injures his subjects, and endangers his own soul.

By this time, sir, I suppose you see upon what grounds I think you have not cleared those difficulties which were charged by me on your method: and my reader will see what reason there was for those imputations, which, with so loud an outcry, you laid upon me of unfair dealing; since there is not one of them which

cannot

cannot be made good to be contained either in your book, or in your hypotheſis; and ſo clearly, that I could not imagine that a man who had ſo far conſidered government, as to engage in print, in ſuch a controverſy as this; could miſs ſeeing it as ſoon as mentioned to him. One of them which very much offends you, and makes you ſo often tell me what I ſay is impertinent, and nothing to the purpoſe, and ſometimes to uſe warmer expreſſions, is, that I argue againſt a power in the magiſtrate to bring men to his own religion: for I could not imagine that, to a man of any thought, it could need proving, that if there were a commiſſion given to all magiſtrates by the law of nature, which obliged them to uſe force to bring men to the true religion; it was not poſſible for them to put this commiſſion in execution, without being judges what was the true religion; and then there needed no great quickneſs to perceive, that every magiſtrate, when your commiſſion came to be put in execution, would, one as well as another, find himſelf obliged to uſe force to bring men to that which he believed to be the true religion. But ſince this was ſo hard for you to ſee, I now have been at the pains to prove it, and thereby to clear all thoſe imputations. I ſhall not inſtance in any other: they are all of a like kind. Only where you complain I have not cited your words fairly, if you can ſhow that I have done it any where in this or the ſecond letter, to the advantage of my cauſe; or to avoid any argument in them, not anſwered; if you pleaſe to ſhow it me, I ſhall either let you ſee your miſtake, or acknowledge mine.

And now, whether you ſhall think what I have ſaid worth that conſideration you promiſe, or take it all for cavils and impertinencies, to me is very indifferent. Enjoy, as you pleaſe, that ſhort and eaſy way of anſwering. But if the party you write for be, as you ſay, God, and the ſouls of men; it will require you ſeriouſly to weigh your ſcheme, examine and put together the parts of it; obſerve the tendency and conſequences; and, in a word, conſider things, and not words. For the party of God and ſouls needs not any help from obſcurity or uncer-

uncertainty of general and equivocal terms; but may be ſpoke out clearly and diſtinctly; needs no retreat in the round of equivalent, or the uncertainty of miſapplied expreſſions, that may ſerve to amuſe and deceive the unwary, but inſtruct no-body; and, laſtly, needs no leave nor allowance from men of art, to direct both ſubjects and magiſtrates to the examination of the ſcriptures, wherein God has revealed to the world the ways and means of ſalvation. In doing of this, in a treatiſe where you profeſs "the ſubject of your inquiry is only "what method is to be uſed to bring men to the true "religion," the party you profeſs to write for, would have juſtified you againſt the rules of any lawful art; and no chriſtian man, of what art ſoever, would have denied you that liberty; and if I miſtake not, the party, you ſay you write for, demands it of you.

If you find upon a review of the whole, that you have managed your cauſe for God and the ſouls of men, with that ſincerity and clearneſs that ſatisfies your own reaſon, and you think may ſatisfy that of other men; I ſhall congratulate to you ſo happy a conſtitution. But if all your magnified and neceſſary means of force, in the way you contend for, reaches no further than to bring men to a bare outward conformity to the church of England; wherein you can ſedately affirm, that it is preſumable that all that are of it are ſo upon reaſon and conviction; I ſuppoſe there needs no more to be ſaid to convince the world what party you write for.

The party you write for is God, you ſay. But if all you have ſaid aims or amounts to nothing more, than that the church of England, as now eſtabliſhed by law, in its doctrines, ceremonies, and diſcipline, ſhould be ſupported by the power of the magiſtrate, and men by force be driven into it; I fear the world will think you have very narrow thoughts of God: or that that is not the party you write for. It is true, you all along ſpeak of bringing men to the true religion. But to evidence to you, that by the one only true religion, you mean only that of the church of England, I tell you, that upon your principles, you cannot name any other church now in the world; (and I again demand of you to do it)

it) for the promoting whereof, or punishing dissenters from it, the magistrate has the same right to use force, as you pretend he has here in England. Till you therefore name some such other true church and true religion, besides that of England, your saying, that God is the party you write for, will rather show that you make bold with his name, than that you do not write for another party.

You say too, you write not for any party, but the souls of men. You write indeed, and contend earnestly, that men should be brought into an outward conformity to the church of England. But that they embrace that profession upon reason and conviction; you are content to have it presumable, without any farther inquiry or examination. And those who are once in the outward communion of the national church, however ignorant or irreligious they are, you leave there unassisted by your only competent means, force; without which, you tell us, the true religion, by its own light and strength, is not able to prevail against men's lusts, and the corruption of nature, so as to be considered as it ought, and heartily embraced. And this dropped not from your pen by chance; but you professedly make excuses for those of the national religion, who are ignorant of the grounds of it; and give us reasons why force cannot be used to those who outwardly conform, to make them consider so as sincerely to embrace, believe, and obey the truth that must save them. But the reverend author of the Pastoral Care tells you, p. 201, "PARTY "is the true name of making converts, except they "become at the same time good men."

If the use of force be necessary for the salvation of souls, and men's souls be the party you write for: you will be suspected to have betrayed your party, if your method and necessary means of salvation reach no further than to bring men to outward conformity, though to the true church; and after that abandons them to their lusts and depraved natures, destitute of the help of force; your necessary and competent means of salvation.

This

This way of managing the matter, whatever you intend, seems rather, in the fitness of it, to be for another party. But since you assure us, you write for nothing but God and men's souls; it can only be said you had a good intention, but ill luck; since your scheme, put into the language of the country, will fit any national church and clergy in the world, that can but suppose itself the true; and that I presume none of them will fail to do.

You were more than ordinary reserved and gracious, when you tell me, That "what party I write for, "you will not undertake to say." But having told me, that my letter tends to the promoting of scepticism in religion; you thought, it is like, that was sufficient to show the party I write for; and so you might safely end your letter with words that looked like civil. But that you may another time be a little better informed what party I write for, I will tell you. They are those who in every nation fear God, work righteousness, and are accepted with him; and not those who in every nation are zealous for human constitutions; cry up nothing so much as outward conformity to the national religion; and are accepted by those who are the promoters of it. Those that I write for are those, who, according to the light of their own consciences, are every-where in earnest in matters of their own salvation, without any desire to impose on others; a party so seldom favoured by any of the powers or sects of the world; a party that has so few preferments to bestow; so few benefices to reward the endeavours of any one who appears for it; that I conclude I shall easily be believed when I say, that neither hopes of preferment, nor a design to recommend myself to those I live amongst, has biassed my understanding, or misled me in my undertaking. So much truth as serves the turn of any particular church, and can be accommodated to the narrow interest of some human constitution, is indeed often received with applause, and the publisher finds his account in it. But I think I may say, truth, in its full latitude of those generous principles of the gospel, which so much recommend

and

and inculcate universal charity, and a freedom from the inventions and impositions of men in the things of God; has so seldom had a fair and favourable hearing anywhere, that he must be very ignorant of the history and nature of man, however dignified and distinguished, who proposes to himself any secular advantage by writing for her at that rate.

As to your request in the close of your letter, I hope this will satisfy you, that you might have spared it; and you, with the rest of the world, will see that all I writ in my former was so true, that you need not have given me any caution for the future. As to the pertinence of what I say, I doubt whether I shall please you; because I find by your last letter, that what is brought by me to show the weakness, absurdities, or insignificancy of what you write, you are very apt to call impertinent, and nothing to the purpose. You must pardon me therefore, if I have endeavoured more to please other readers than you in that point. I hope they will find, in what I have said, not much beside the matter. But to a man who, supposing himself in the right, builds all upon that supposition, and takes it for an injury to have that privilege denied him; to a man who would sovereignly decide for all the world, what is the true religion; and thereby impower what magistrates he thinks fit, and what not, to use force; to such a man, not to seem impertinent, would be really to be so. This makes me pleased with your reply to so many passages of my letter, that they were nothing to the purpose: and it is in your choice whether in your opinion any thing in this shall be so.

But since this depends upon your keeping steadily to clear and settled notions of things, separate from words and expressions used in a doubtful and undetermined signification; wherewith men of art often amuse themselves and others; I shall not be so unreasonable as to expect, whatever you promise, that you should lay by your learning to embrace truth, and own what will not perhaps suit very well with your circumstances and interest.

I ſee, my deſign not to omit any thing that you might think looks like an argument in yours, has made mine grow beyond the ſize of a letter. But an anſwer to any one being very little different from a letter, I ſhall let it go under that title. I have in it alſo endeavoured to bring the ſcattered parts of your ſcheme into ſome method, under diſtinct heads; to give a fuller and more diſtinct view of them; wherein, if any of the arguments, which give ſupport to your hypotheſis, have eſcaped me unawares, be pleaſed to ſhow them me, and I ſhall either acknowledge their force, or endeavour to ſhow their weakneſs.

I am, SIR,

Your moſt humble ſervant,

June 20, 1692.

PHILANTHROPUS.

A FOURTH

A FOURTH

LETTER

FOR

TOLERATION.

* A FOURTH

LETTER

FOR

TOLERATION.

SIR,

A Freſh revival of the controverſy formerly between you and me, is what I ſuppoſe no-body did expect from you after twelve years ſilence. But reputation, a ſufficient cauſe for a new war, as you give the world to underſtand, hath put a reſolution into your heart, and arms into your hands to make an example of me, to the ſhame and confuſion of all thoſe who could be ſo injurious to you, as to think you could quit the opinion you had appeared for in print, and agree with me in the matter of Toleration. It is viſible how tender even men of the moſt ſettled calmneſs are in point of reputation, and it is allowed the moſt excuſable part of human

* In anſwer to "A Second Letter to the Author of the Three Letters "for Toleration. From the Author of the Argument of the Letter con- "cerning Toleration briefly conſidered and anſwered. And of the De- "fence of it. With a Poſtſcript, taking ſome notice of two paſſages in "The Rights of the Proteſtant Diſſenters."

frailty; and therefore no-body can wonder to see a report thought injurious laboured against with might and main, and the assistance and cause of religion itself taken in and made use of to put a stop to it. But yet for all this there are sober men who are of opinion, that it better becomes a Christian temper, that disputes, especially of religion, should be waged purely for the sake of truth, and not for our own: self should have nothing to do in them. But since as we see it will croud itself in, and be often the principal agent; your ingenuity in owning what has brought you upon the stage again, and set you on work, after the ease and quiet you resolutely maintained yourself in so many years; ought to be commended, in giving us a view of the discreet choice you have made of a method suited to your purpose, which you publish to the world in these words, p. 2: "Being desirous to put a stop to a report so injurious, as well as groundless, as I look upon this to be, I think, it will be no improper way of doing it, if I thus signify to you and the reader, that I find nothing more convincing in this your long letter, than I did in your two former; giving withal a brief SPECIMEN of the answerableness of it: which I choose to do upon a few pages at the beginning, where you have placed your greatest strength, or at least so much of it, as you think sufficient to put an end to this controversy."

Here we have your declaration of war, of the grounds that moved you to it, and of your compendious way to assured victory; which I must own is very new and very remarkable. You choose a few pages out of the beginning of my Third Letter; in these, you say, "I have placed my greatest strength." So that, what I have there said being baffled, it gives you a just triumph over my whole long Letter; and all the rest of it being but pitiful, weak, impertinent stuff, is by the overthrow of this forlorn hope fully confuted.

This is called answering by SPECIMEN. A new way, which the world owes to your invention; an evidence that whilst you said nothing you did not spare thinking. And indeed it was a noble thought, a stratagem, which I believe

I believe ſcarce any other but yourſelf would have found out in a meditation of twice twelve years; how to anſwer arguments without ſaying a word to them, or ſo much as reciting them; and, by examining ſix or ſeven pages in the beginning of a book, reduce to nothing above three hundred pages of it that follow. This is indeed a deciſive ſtroke that lays all flat before you. Who can ſtand againſt ſuch a conqueror, who, by barely attacking of one, kills an hundred? This would certainly be an admirable way, did it not degrade the conqueror, whoſe buſineſs is to do; and turn him into a mere talking gazetteer, whoſe boaſts are of no conſequence. For after ſlaughter of foes, and routing of armies by ſuch a dead-doing hand, no-body thinks it ſtrange to find them all alive again ſafe and ſound upon their feet, and in a poſture of defending themſelves. The event, in all ſorts of controverſies, hath often better inſtructed thoſe who have, without bringing it to trial, preſumed on the weakneſs of their adverſaries. However, this which you have ſet up, of confuting without arguing; cannot be denied to be a ready way, and well thought on to ſet you up high, and your reputation ſecure in the thoughts of your believing readers; if that be, as it ſeems it is, your buſineſs: but, as I take it, tends not at all to the informing their underſtandings, and making them ſee the truth and grounds it ſtands on. That perhaps is too much for the profane vulgar to know; it is enough for them that you know it for them, and have aſſured them, that you can, when you pleaſe to condeſcend ſo far, confound all that any one offers againſt your opinion. An implicit faith of your being in the right, and aſcribing victory to you, even in points whereof you have ſaid nothing; is that which ſome ſort of men think moſt uſeful; and ſo their followers have but tongues for their champion to give him the praiſe and authority he aims at, it is no matter whether they have any eyes for themſelves to ſee on which ſide the truth lies. Thus methinks you and I both find our account in this controverſy under your management; you in ſetting your reputation ſafe from the blemiſh it would have been to it that you were brought over to my

opinion; and I in seeing, (if you will forgive me so presumptuous a word) that you have left my cause safe in all those parts you have said nothing to, and not very much damaged in that part you have attacked; as I hope to show the indifferent reader. You enter upon your specimen, p. 2, by minding me that I tell you, "That I doubt not but to let you see, that if you will "be true to your own principles, and stand to what "you have said, you must carry some degrees of force "to all those degrees which in words you declare "against; even to the discipline of fire and faggot." And you say, "if I make my word good, you assure me you "will carry a faggot yourself to the burning what you "have written for so unmerciful and outrageous a dis-"cipline: but till I have done that, you suppose the "discipline you have endeavoured to defend, may re-"main safe and unhurt; as it is, in its own nature, "harmless and salutary to the world."

To promise fairly is then the part of an honest man, when the time of performance is not yet come. But it falls out unluckily here, for you who have undertaken, by answering some parts of my second Letter, to show the answerableness of the whole; that instead of answering, you promise to retract, "if I make good my "word, in proving upon your own principles you must "carry your some degrees of force to fire and faggot."

Sir, my endeavours to make my word good, have lain before you a pretty competent time; the world is witness of it, and will, as I imagine, think it time for you, since you yourself have brought this question upon the stage, either to acknowledge that I have made my word good; or by invalidating my arguments, show that I have not. He that after a debt of so many years only promises what brave things he will do hereafter, is hardly thought upon the Exchange to do what he ought. The account in his hand requires to be made up and balanced; and that will show, not what he is to promise, but, if he be a fair man, what he is to perform. If the schools make longer allowances of time, and admit evasions for satisfaction; it is fit you use your privilege, and take more time to consider; only I crave

leave in the mean while to refer my reader to what I have ſaid on this argument, Chap. iv. of my third Letter, that he may have a view of your way of anſwering by ſpecimen, and judge whether all that I have there urged be anſwered by what you ſay here; or what you promiſe here be ever like to be performed.

The next ſample you give to ſhow the anſwerableneſs of my Letter, is not much more lucky than the former; it may be ſeen, p. 3 and 4, where you ſay, that I tell you, p. 119, "That you have altered the queſtion;" for it ſeems, p. 26, you tell me the queſtion between us is, "Whether the magiſtrate has a right to uſe force, "to bring men to the true religion? Whereas, p. 76, "you yourſelf, I ſay, own the queſtion to be, whether "the magiſtrate has a right to uſe force in matters of "religion?" "Which affirmation, of mine, you muſt "take leave to tell me, is a mere fiction, for neither "p. 76, nor any where elſe, do you own the queſtion to "be what I ſay you do."

"And as to uſing force in matters of religion, (which "you ſay are my words not yours) if I mean by it the "uſing force to bring men to any other religion beſides "the true; you are ſo far from owning the queſtion to "be, whether the magiſtrate has a right to uſe force for "ſuch a purpoſe, that you have always thought it out "of queſtion, that no man in the world, magiſtrate or "other, can have any right to uſe either force, or any "other means that I can name, to bring men to any "falſe religion; how much ſoever he may perſuade "himſelf that it is true."

"It is not therefore from any alteration, but from "the true ſtate of the queſtion, that you take occaſion, "as I complain without cauſe, to lay a load on me, "for charging you with the abſurdities of a power in "the magiſtrates to puniſh men, to bring them to "their religion." "But it ſeems, having little to ſay "againſt what you do aſſert, you ſay, I find it neceſſary "myſelf to alter the queſtion, and to make the world "believe that you aſſert what you do not; that I may "have ſomething before me which I can confute."

In

In this paragraph you positively deny, that it is any where owned by you as the question between us, "Whether the magistrate has a right of using force in "matters of religion?" Indeed these words are not as "they are cited in p. 76, of your former Letter; but "he that will turn over the leaf, may, in p. 78, read these "words of yours, viz. that "You refer it to me, whe-"ther I, in saying no-body has a right, or you, in say-"ing the magistrate has a right, to use force in matters of "religion, have most reason:" though you positively tell me, "that neither p. 76, nor any where else, do "you own the question to be what I say you do." And now let the reader judge between us. I should not perhaps have so much as taken notice of this, but that you who are so sparing of your answer, that you think a brief specimen upon some few pages of the beginning of my Letter, sufficient to confute all I have said in it; do yet spend the better part of two pages on this; which if I had been mistaken in, it had been of no great consequence; of which I see no other use you have, but to cast on me some civil reflections of your fashion; and fix on me the imputation of fiction, mere fiction; a compliment which I shall not return you, though you say "USING FORCE IN MATTERS OF RELIGION," are my words, not yours. Whether they are your words or not, let p. 78, of your former Letter decide; where you own yourself to say, that "the magistrate has a right to use "force in matters of religion." So that this, as I take it, is a specimen of your being very positive in a mistake, and about a plain matter of fact; about an action of your own; and so will scarce prove a specimen of the answerableness of all I say in my Letter; unless we must allow that truth and falshood are equally answerable, when you declare against either of them.

The next part of your specimen we have, p. 4, 5, where you tell me that I undertake to prove, that "if "upon your grounds the magistrate be obliged to use "force to bring men to the true religion; it will neces-"sarily follow, that every magistrate, who believes his "religion to be true, is obliged to use force to bring "men to his."

"Now

" Now becauſe this undertaking is ſo neceſſary for " me; and my whole cauſe ſeems to depend upon the " ſucceſs of it: you ſhall the more carefully conſider " how well I perform it. But before you do this, it " will be fit to let me know, in what ſenſe you grant " my inference, and in what ſenſe you deny it. Now " that every magiſtrate, who upon juſt and ſufficient " grounds believes his religion to be true, is obliged to " uſe ſome moderate penalties, (which is all the force " you ever contended for) to bring men to his religion, " you freely grant; becauſe that muſt needs be the true " religion; ſince no other can, upon ſuch grounds, be " believed to be true. But that any magiſtrate, who " upon weak and deceitful grounds believes a falſe re- " ligion to be true, (and he can never do it upon better " grounds) is obliged to uſe the ſame, or any other " means to bring men to his religion; this you flatly " deny; nor can it by any rules of reaſoning be inferred " from what you aſſert."

Here you tell me you grant my inference, in this ſenſe, viz. " That every magiſtrate, who upon juſt " and ſufficient grounds believes his religion to be true, " is bound to uſe force to bring men to it."

Here you grant that every magiſtrate, without knowing that his religion is true, is obliged, upon his believing it to be true, to uſe force to bring men to it; indeed you add, " who believes it to be true upon juſt " and ſufficient grounds." So you have got a diſtinction, and that always ſets off a diſputant, though many times it is of no uſe to his argument. For here let me aſk you, who muſt be judge, whether the grounds upon which he believes his religion to be true, be juſt and ſufficient? Muſt the magiſtrate himſelf judge for himſelf, or muſt you judge for him? A third competitor in this judgment I know not where you will find for your turn. If every magiſtrate muſt judge for himſelf, whether the grounds upon which he believes his religion to be true, are juſt and ſufficient grounds; your limitation of the uſe of force to ſuch only as believe upon juſt and ſufficient grounds, bating that it is an ornament to your ſtyle and learning, might have been ſpared, ſince

it

it leaves my inference untouched in the full latitude I have expreſſed it concerning every magiſtrate; there not being any one magiſtrate excluded thereby from an obligation to uſe force to bring men to his own religion, by this your diſtinction. For if every magiſtrate, who upon juſt and ſufficient grounds believes his religion to be true, be obliged to uſe force to bring men to his religion, and every magiſtrate be himſelf judge, whether the grounds he believes upon be juſt and ſufficient; it is viſible every magiſtrate is obliged to uſe force to bring men to his religion; ſince any one, who believes any religion to be true, cannot but judge the grounds, upon which he believes it to be true, are juſt and ſufficient; for if he judged otherwiſe, he could not then believe it to be true. If you ſay, you muſt judge for the magiſtrate, then what you grant is this, That every magiſtrate who, upon grounds that you judge to be juſt and ſufficient, believes his religion to be true, is obliged to uſe force to bring men to his religion. If this be your meaning, as it ſeems not much remote from it, you will do well to ſpeak it out, that the magiſtrates of the world may know who to have recourſe to in the difficulty you put upon them, in declaring them under an obligation to uſe force to bring men to the true religion; which they can neither certainly know, nor muſt venture to uſe force to bring men to, upon their own perſuaſion of the truth of it; when they have nothing but one of theſe two, viz. knowledge, or belief that the religion they promote is true, to determine them. Neceſſity has at laſt (unleſs you would have the magiſtrate act in the dark and uſe his force wholly at random) prevailed on you to grant, that the magiſtrate may uſe force to bring men to that religion which he believes to be true; but, ſay you, "his belief muſt "be upon juſt and ſufficient grounds." The ſame neceſſity remaining ſtill, muſt prevail with you to go one ſtep further, and tell me whether the magiſtrate himſelf muſt be judge, whether the grounds, upon which he believes his religion to be true, be juſt and ſufficient; or whether you are to be judge for him. If you ſay the firſt, my inference ſtands good, and then this queſtion, I think,

think, is yielded, and at an end. If you ſay you are to be judge for the magiſtrates, I ſhall congratulate to the magiſtrates of the world the way you have found out for them to acquit themſelves of their duty, if you will but pleaſe to publiſh it, that they may know where to find you; for in truth, ſir, I prefer you, in this caſe, to the pope; though you know that old gentleman at Rome has long ſince laid claim to all deciſions of this kind, and alleges infallibility for the ſupport of his title; which indeed will ſcarce be able to ſtand at Rome, or any where elſe, without the help of infallibility. But of this perhaps more in the next paragraph.

You go on with your ſpecimen in your next paragraph, p. 5, which I ſhall crave leave of my reader to ſet down at large, it being a moſt exact and ſtudied piece of artificial fencing, wherein, under the cover of good words, and the appearance of nice thinking, nothing is ſaid; and therefore may deſerve to be kept, not as a ſpecimen of your anſwering; for, as we ſhall ſee, you anſwer nothing; but as a ſpecimen of your ſkill in ſeeming to ſay ſomething where you have nothing to anſwer. You tell me that I ſay, p. 120, that "I ſuppoſe that you will grant me (what he muſt be a hard man indeed that will not grant) that any thing laid upon the magiſtrate as a duty, is ſome way or other practicable. Now the magiſtrate being obliged to uſe force in matters of religion, but yet ſo as to bring men only to the true religion; he will not be in any capacity to perform this part of his duty, unleſs the religion he is to promote be what he can certainly know; or elſe what it is ſufficient for him to believe to be the true: either his knowledge, or his opinion, muſt point out that religion to him, which he is by force to promote." Where, if by knowing, or knowledge, I mean the effect of ſtrict demonſtration; and by believing, or opinion, any ſort of aſſent or perſuaſion how ſlightly ſoever grounded: then you muſt deny the ſufficiency of my diviſion; becauſe there is a third ſort or degree of perſuaſion, which, though not grounded upon ſtrict demonſtration; yet in firmneſs and ſtability does far exceed that which is built upon

" upon ſlight appearances of probability; being grounded " upon ſuch clear and ſolid proof, as leaves no rea- " ſonable doubt in an attentive and unbiaſſed mind: " ſo that it approaches very near to that which is pro- " duced by demonſtration; and is therefore, as it re- " ſpects religion, very frequently and familiarly called " in ſcripture not faith or belief only, but knowledge; " and in divers places full aſſurance; as might eaſily " be ſhown, if that were needful. Now this kind of " perſuaſion, this knowledge, this full aſſurance men " may, and ought to have of the true religion: but " they can never have it of a falſe one. And this it " is, that muſt point out that religion to the magiſ- " trate, which he is to promote by the method you " contend for."

Here the firſt thing you do is to pretend an uncertainty of what I mean by " knowing or knowledge, and " by believing or opinion." Firſt, As to knowledge, I have ſaid " certainly know." I have called it " vi- " ſion; knowledge and certainty; knowledge properly " ſo called." And for believing or opinion, I ſpeak of believing with aſſurance; and ſay, that believing in the higheſt degree of aſſurance, is not knowledge. That whatever is not capable of demonſtration, is not, unleſs it be ſelf-evident, capable to produce knowledge, how well grounded and great ſoever the aſſurance of faith may be wherewith it is received. That I grant, that a ſtrong aſſurance of any truth, ſettled upon prevalent and well-grounded arguments of probability, is often called knowledge in popular ways of talking; but being here to diſtinguiſh between knowledge and belief, to what degrees of confidence ſoever raiſed, their boundaries muſt be kept, and their names not confounded; with more to the ſame purpoſe, p. 120, 121; whereby it is ſo plain, that by knowledge I mean the effect of ſtrict demonſtration; and by believing or opinion, I mean any degree of perſuaſion even to the higheſt degree of aſſurance; that I challenge you yourſelf to ſet it down in plainer and more expreſs terms. But no-body can blame you for not finding your adverſary's meaning, let it be ever ſo plain; when you can find nothing

to

to anſwer to it. The reaſon therefore which you allege for the denying the ſufficiency of my diviſion, is no reaſon at all. Your pretended reaſon is, becauſe there is "a third ſort or degree of perſuaſion; which though "not grounded upon ſtrict demonſtration; yet in firm-"neſs and ſtability does far exceed that which is built "upon ſlight appearances of probability," &c. Let it be ſo, that there is a degree of perſuaſion not grounded upon ſtrict demonſtration, far exceeding that which is built upon ſlight appearances of probability. But let me aſk you what reaſon can this be to deny the ſufficiency of my diviſion, becauſe there is, as you ſay, a third ſort or degree of perſuaſion; when even that which you call this third ſort or degree of perſuaſion is contained in my diviſion. This is a ſpecimen indeed, not of anſwering what I have ſaid; but of not anſwering; and for ſuch I leave it to the reader. "A degree of per-"ſuaſion, though not grounded on ſtrict demonſtra-"tion, yet in firmneſs and ſtability far exceeding that "which is built upon ſlight appearances of probability, "you call here a third ſort or degree of perſuaſion." Pray tell me which are the two other ſorts; for knowledge upon ſtrict demonſtration, is not belief or perſuaſion, but wholly above it. Beſides, if the degrees of firmneſs in perſuaſion make different ſorts of perſuaſion, there are not only three, but three hundred ſorts of perſuaſion; and therefore the naming of your third ſort was with little ground, and to no purpoſe or tendency to an anſwer; though the drawing in ſomething like a diſtinction be always to the purpoſe of a man who hath nothing to anſwer; it giving occaſion for the uſe of many good words; which, though nothing to the point, ſerve to cover the diſputant's ſaying nothing, under the appearance of learning, to thoſe who will not be at the pains to examine what he ſays.

You ſay, "every magiſtrate is by the law of nature "under an obligation to uſe force to bring men to the "true religion." To this I urge, that the magiſtrate hath nothing elſe to determine him in the uſe of force, for promotion of any religion one before another, but only his own belief or perſuaſion of the truth of it.

Here

Here you had nothing to do, but fairly to grant or deny; but inſtead thereof you firſt raiſe a groundleſs doubt as I have ſhown about my meaning, whereof there could be no doubt at all to any one who would but read what I had ſaid; and thereupon having got a pretence for a diſtinction, you ſolemnly tell the world "there is "a third ſort of perſuaſion, which, though not grounded "on ſtrict demonſtration; yet in firmneſs and ſtability "does far exceed that which is built upon ſlight ap- "pearances of probability, leaving no doubt, approach- "ing near to knowledge, being full aſſurance." Well, the magiſtrate hath a "perſuaſion of firmneſs and ſta- "bility, has full aſſurance;" muſt he be determined by this his full aſſurance in the promoting of that religion by force, of whoſe truth he is in ſo high a degree of perſuaſion ſo fully aſſured? "No, ſay you, it muſt "be grounded upon ſuch clear and ſolid proof as leaves "no reaſonable doubt in an attentive and unbiaſſed "mind." To which the magiſtrate is ready to reply, that he, upon his grounds, can ſee no reaſonable doubt; and that his is an attentive and unbiaſſed mind; of all which he himſelf is to be judge, till you can produce your authority to judge for him; though, in the concluſion, you actually make yourſelf judge for him. "It is ſuch a kind of perſuaſion, ſuch a full aſſurance "muſt point out to the magiſtrate that religion he is to "promote by force, which can never be had but of the "true religion:" which is in effect, as every one may ſee, the religion that you judge to be true; and not the religion the magiſtrate judges to be true. For pray tell me, muſt the magiſtrate's full aſſurance point out to him the religion which he is by force to promote; or muſt he by force promote a religion, of whoſe truth he hath no belief, no aſſurance at all? If you ſay the firſt of theſe, you grant that every magiſtrate muſt uſe force to promote his own religion; for that is the religion whereof he has ſo full aſſurance, that he ventures his eternal ſtate upon it. Ay, ſay you, that is for want of attention; and becauſe he is not unbiaſſed. It is like he will ſay the ſame of you, and then you are quits. And that he ſhould by force promote that religion which he

he believes not to be true, is so absurd, that I think you can neither expect it, nor bring yourself to say it. Neither of these therefore being answers that you can make use of, that which lies at the bottom, though you give it but covertly, is this, "That the magistrate ought by "force to promote the religion that you believe with full "assurance to be true." This would do admirably well for your purpose, were not the magistrate intitled to ask, "who made you a judge for him in the case?" And ready to retort your own words upon you, that it is want of attention and unbiassedness in you, that puts your religion past doubt with you upon your proofs of it. Try when you please with a bramin, a mahometan, a papist, lutheran, quaker, anabaptist, presbyterian, &c. you will find if you argue with them, as you do here with me, that the matter will rest here between you, and that you are no more a judge for any of them than they are for you. Men in all religions have equally strong persuasions, and every one must judge for himself; nor can any one judge for another, and you least of all for the magistrate; the ground you build upon, that "firm-"ness and stability of persuasion in the highest degree "of assurance leaves no doubt, can never be had of a "false religion" being false; all your talk of full assurance pointing out to the magistrate the true religion that he is obliged by force to promote, amounts to no more but his own religion, and can point out no other to him.

However, in the next paragraph you go on with your specimen, and tell me, "Hence appears the im-"pertinency of all I discourse, p. 143, 144, concern-"ing the difference between faith and knowledge: "where the thing I was concerned to make out, if I "would speak to the purpose, was no other but this, "that there are as clear and solid grounds for the belief "of false religions, as there are for the belief of the true: "or, that men both as firmly and as rationally believe "and embrace false religions as they can the true. "This, you confess, is a point, which, you say, when I "have well cleared and established it, will do my busi-"ness, but nothing else will. And therefore my talk

" of faith and knowledge; however it may amuſe ſuch " as are prone to admire all that I ſay; will never en- " able me, before better judges, from the duty of every " magiſtrate to uſe moderate penalties for promoting " the true religion, to infer the ſame obligation to lie " upon every magiſtrate in reſpect of his religion, " whatever it be."

Where the impertinency lies will be ſeen when it is remembered, that the queſtion between us is not what religion has the moſt clear and ſolid grounds for the belief of it; much leſs whether " there are as clear and " ſolid grounds for the belief of falſe religions, as there " are for the belief of the true," i. e. whether falſhood has as much truth in it as truth itſelf? A queſtion, which, I gueſs, no man, but one of your great pertinency, could ever have propoſed. But the queſtion here between you and me, is what muſt point out to the magiſtrate that religion which he is by force to promote, that ſo he may be able to perform the duty that you pretend is incumbent on him by the law of nature; and here I proved, that having no certain demonſtrative knowledge of the true religion, all that was left him to determine him in the application of force, (which you make the proper inſtrument of promoting the true religion) for the promoting the true religion, was only his perſuaſion, belief, or aſſurance of the true religion, which was always his own; and ſo in this ſtate the religion, which by force the magiſtrates of the world muſt of neceſſity promote, muſt be either their own or none at all. Thus the argument ſtanding between us, I am apt to think the world may be of opinion, that it had been pertinent to your cauſe to have anſwered my argument, if you had any thing to anſwer; which ſince you have not done, this ſpecimen alſo of the facility, wherewith you can anſwer all I have ſaid in the third Letter, may be joined to the former, and be a ſpecimen of ſomething elſe than what you intended it. For in truth, ſir, the endeavouring to ſet up a new queſtion abſurd in itſelf, and nothing at all to the purpoſe, without offering any thing to clear the difficulty you were preſſed with; will to underſtanding readers appear pertinent in one

who

who ſets himſelf up for an arrant Drawcanſir, and is giving ſpecimens of himſelf, that nothing can ſtand in his way.

It is with the ſame pertinency, that to this propoſition, "that there are as clear and ſolid grounds for "the belief of a falſe religion as there are for the be-"lief of the true," you join this following as an equivalent, "Or that men may both as firmly and as ratio-"nally believe and embrace falſe religions as they can "the true;" and you would fain have it thought that your cauſe is gained, unleſs I will maintain theſe two abſurd propoſitions, which my argument has nothing to do with.

And you ſeem to me to build upon theſe two falſe propoſitions.

I. That, in the want of knowledge and certainty of which is the true religion, nothing is fit to ſet the magiſtrate upon doing his duty in employing of force to make men conſider and embrace the true religion, but the higheſt perſuaſion and full aſſurance of its truth. Whereas his own perſuaſion of the truth of his own religion, in what degree ſoever it be, ſo he believes it to be true; will, if he thinks it his duty by force to promote the true, be ſufficient to ſet him on work. Nor can it be otherwiſe, ſince his own perſuaſion of his own religion, which he judges ſo well grounded as to venture his future ſtate upon it, cannot but be ſufficient to ſet him upon doing what he takes to be his duty in bringing others to the ſame religion.

II. Another falſe ſuppoſition you build upon is this, that the true religion is always embraced with the firmeſt aſſent. There is ſcarce any one ſo little acquainted with the world, that hath not met with inſtances of men moſt unmoveably confident, and fully aſſured in a religion which was not the true. Nor is there among the many abſurd religions of the world, almoſt any one that does not find votaries to lay down their lives for it: and if that be not firm perſuaſion and full aſſurance that is ſtronger than the love of life, and has force enough to make a man throw himſelf into the arms of death, it is hard to know what is firm per-

ſuaſion and full aſſurance. Jews and mahometans have frequently given inſtances of this higheſt degree of perſuaſion. And the bramins religion in the Eaſt is entertained by its followers with no leſs aſſurance of its truth, ſince it is not unuſual for ſome of them to throw themſelves under the wheels of a mighty chariot, wherein they on ſolemn days draw the image of their God about in proceſſion, there to be cruſhed to death, and ſacrifice their lives in honour of the God they believe in. If it be objected, that thoſe are examples of mean and common men; but the great men of the world, and the heads of ſocieties, do not ſo eaſily give themſelves up to a confirmed bigotry. I anſwer, The perſuaſion they have of the truth of their own religion, is viſibly ſtrong enough to make them venture themſelves, and uſe force to others upon the belief of it. Princes are made like other men; believe upon the like grounds that other men do; and act as warmly upon that belief, though the grounds of their perſuaſion be in themſelves not very clear, or may appear to others to be not of the utmoſt ſolidity. Men act by the ſtrength of their perſuaſion, though they do not always place their perſuaſion and aſſent on that ſide on which, in reality, the ſtrength of truth lies. Reaſons that are not thought of, nor heard of, nor rightly apprehended, nor duly weighed, make no impreſſion on the mind: and truth, how richly ſoever ſtored with them, may not be aſſented to, but lie neglected. The only difference between princes and other men herein, is this, that PRINCES ARE USUALLY MORE POSITIVE IN MATTERS OF RELIGION, BUT LESS INSTRUCTED. The ſoftneſs and pleaſures of a court, to which they are uſually abandoned when young; and affairs of ſtate which wholly poſſeſs them when grown up; ſeldom allow any of them time to conſider and examine that they may embrace the true religion. And here your ſcheme, upon your own ſuppoſition, has a fundamental errour that overturns it. For you affirming that force, your way applied, is the neceſſary and competent means to bring men to the true religion; you leave magiſtrates deſtitute of theſe neceſſary and competent means of being brought to the true religion, though

though that be the readieſt way, in your ſcheme the only way, to bring other men to it, and is contended for by you as the only method.

But further, you will perhaps be ready to reply, that you do not ſay barely, that men may not as firmly, but that they cannot as firmly and as rationally, believe and embrace falſe religions as they can the true. This, be it as true as it will, is of no manner of advantage to your cauſe. For here the queſtion, neceſſary to be conſidered in your way of arguing, returns upon you, who muſt be judge whether the magiſtrate believes and embraces his religion rationally or no? If he himſelf be judge, then he does act rationally, and it muſt have the ſame operation on him, as if it were the moſt rational in the world: if you muſt be judge for him, whether his belief be rational or no, why may not others judge for him as well as you? or at leaſt he judge for you, as well as you for him; at leaſt till you have produced your patent of infallibility and commiſſion of ſuperintendency over the belief of the magiſtrates of the earth, and ſhown the commiſſion whereby you are appointed the director of the magiſtrates of the world in their belief, which is or is not the true religion? Do not think this ſaid without cauſe; your whole diſcourſe here has no other tendency, but the making yourſelf judge of what religion ſhould be promoted by the magiſtrate's force; which, let me tell you by the way, every warm zealot in any religion has as much right to be as you. I beſeech you tell me, are you not perſuaded, nay, fully aſſured, that the church of England is in the right, and all that diſſent from her are in the wrong; Why elſe would you have force uſed to make them conſider and conform? If then the religion of the church of England be, as you are fully aſſured, the only true religion, and the magiſtrate muſt ground his perſuaſion of the truth of his religion on ſuch clear and ſolid proofs as the true religion alone has, and no falſe one can have; and by that perſuaſion the magiſtrate muſt be directed in the uſe of force, (for all this in effect you ſay, in the ſixth and beginning of the ſeventh page;) what is this but covertly to ſay, that it is the duty of all magiſtrates to

uſe force to bring men to embrace the religion of the church of England? Which, ſince it plainly follows from your doctrine, and I think you cannot deny to be your opinion, and what in effect you contend for; you will do well to ſpeak it out in plain words, and then there will need no more to be ſaid in the queſtion.

And now I deſire it may be conſidered, what advantage this ſuppoſition of force, which is ſuppoſed put into the magiſtrate's hands by the law of nature to be uſed in religion, brings to the true religion, when it arms five hundred magiſtrates againſt the true religion, who muſt unavoidably in the ſtate of things in the world act againſt it, for one that uſes force for it. I ſay that this uſe of force in the magiſtrate's hand, is barely ſuppoſed by you from the benefit it is like to produce; but it being demonſtration, that the prejudice that will accrue to the true religion from ſuch an uſe of force, is five hundred times more than the advantage can be expected from it; the natural and unavoidable inference from your own ground of benefit, is, that God never gave any ſuch power to the magiſtrate; and there it will reſt till you can by ſome better argument prove the magiſtrate to have ſuch a power: to which give me leave to add one word more.

You ſay the magiſtrate is obliged by the law of nature to uſe force to promote the true religion; muſt he ſtand ſtill and do nothing till he certainly know which is the true religion? If ſo, the commiſſion is loſt, and he can never do his duty; for to certain knowledge of the true religion, he can in this world never arrive. May he then act upon "firm perſuaſions and full aſ-"ſurance, grounded upon ſuch clear and ſolid proofs "as the true religion alone has, and no falſe one can "have?" And then indeed you have diſtinguiſhed yourſelf into a ſafe retreat. For who can doubt but your third ſort or degree of perſuaſion, if that be your meaning, will determine the magiſtrate to the true religion, when it is grounded on thoſe which are the proofs only of the true religion; which if it be all that you intend by your full aſſurance, (which is the title you give to this your third ſort or degree of perſuaſion),

I muſt

I muſt deſire you to apply this in anſwer to my argument. I ſay, magiſtrates in general have nothing to determine them in their application of force but their own perſuaſion; and your anſwer is, the magiſtrates of the true religion have their own perſuaſion to determine them; but of all the other magiſtrates, which are above an hundred, I might ſay a thouſand to one, you ſay nothing at all; and thus, by the help of a diſtinction, the queſtion is reſolved. I ſay the magiſtrates are not in a capacity to perform their duty, if they be obliged to uſe force to promote the true religion, ſince they have nothing to determine them but their own perſuaſion of the truth of any religion; which, in the variety of religions which the magiſtrates of the world have embraced, cannot direct them to the true. Yes, ſay you, their perſuaſion, who have embraced the true religion, will direct them to the true religion. Which amounts at laſt to no more but this, That the magiſtrate that is in the right, is in the right, A very true propoſition without doubt; but whether it removes the difficulty I propoſed, any better than begging the queſtion, you were beſt conſider. There are five hundred magiſtrates of falſe religions for one that is of the true; I ſpeak much within compaſs; it is a duty incumbent on them all, ſay you, to uſe force to bring men to the true religion. My queſtion is, how can this be compaſſed by men who are unavoidably determined by the perſuaſion of the truth of their own religion? It is anſwered, they who are of the true religion will perform their duty. A great advantage ſurely to true religion, and worth the contending for, that it ſhould be the magiſtrate's duty to uſe force for promoting the true religion, when in the ſtate of things that is at preſent in the world, and always hitherto has been, one magiſtrate in five hundred will uſe force to promote the true religion, and the other four hundred ninety-nine to promote falſe ones:

But perhaps you will tell me, That you do not allow that magiſtrates, who are of falſe religions, ſhould be determined by their own perſuaſions, which are "built "upon ſlight appearances of probability; but ſuch as "are grounded upon clear and ſolid proofs," which the

true religion alone has. In anſwer to this, I aſk, Who muſt be judge whether his perſuaſion be grounded on clear and ſolid proofs; the magiſtrate himſelf, or you for him? If the magiſtrate himſelf, then we are but where we were; and all that you ſay here, with the diſtinction that you have made about ſeveral ſorts of perſuaſion, ſerves only to lead us about to the ſame place: for the magiſtrate, of what religion ſoever, muſt, notwithſtanding all you have ſaid, be determined by his own perſuaſion. If you ſay you muſt be judge of the clearneſs and ſolidity of the proofs upon which the magiſtrate grounds the belief of his own religion, it is time you ſhould produce your patent, and ſhow the commiſſion whereby you act.

There are other qualifications you aſſign of the proof, on which you tell us "your third ſort or degree of perſuaſion is grounded; and that is ſuch as leaves no "reaſonable doubt in an attentive and unbiaſſed mind:" which unleſs you muſt be judge what is a reaſonable doubt, and which is an attentive and unbiaſſed mind, will do you no manner of ſervice. If the magiſtrate muſt be judge for himſelf in this caſe, you can have nothing to ſay to him; but if you muſt be judge, then any doubt about your religion will be unreaſonable, and his not embracing and promoting your religion will be want of attention and an unbiaſſed mind. But let me tell you, give but the ſame liberty of judging for the magiſtrate of your religion to the men of another religion, which they have as much right to as you have to judge for the magiſtrate of any other religion in the points mentioned; all this will return upon you. Go into France and try whether it be not ſo. So that your plea for the magiſtrate's uſing force for promoting the true religion, as you have ſtated it, gives as much power and authority to the king of France to uſe it againſt his diſſenting ſubjects, as to any other prince in Chriſtendom to uſe it againſt theirs; name which you pleaſe.

The fallacy in making it the magiſtrate's duty to promote by force the only true religion lies in this, that you allow yourſelf to ſuppoſe the magiſtrate, who is of your religion, to be well-grounded, attentive and unbiaſſed,

biaſſed, and fully and firmly aſſured that his religion is true; but that other magiſtrates of other religions different from yours are not ſo: which, what is it but to erect yourſelf into a ſtate of infallibility above all other men of different perſuaſions from yours, which yet they have as good a title to as yourſelf?

Having thus advanced yourſelf into the chair, and given yourſelf the power of deciding for all men which is, and which is not, the true religion; it is not to be wondered that you ſo roundly pronounce all my diſcourſe, p. 143, 144, "concerning the difference be-"tween faith and knowledge to be impertinency;" and ſo magiſterially to tell me, "that the thing I was there "concerned to make out, if I would ſpeak to the pur-"poſe, was no other but this, that there are as clear "and as ſolid grounds for the belief of falſe religions, as "there are for belief of the true: or, that men may both "as firmly and as rationally believe and embrace falſe "religions as they can the true."

The impertinency in theſe two or three pages, I ſhall leave to ſhift for itſelf in the judgment of any indifferent reader; and will only, at preſent, examine what you tell "I was concerned to make out, if I would ſpeak to the "purpoſe."

My buſineſs there was to prove, That the magiſtrate being taught that it was his duty to uſe force to promote the true religion, it would thence unavoidably follow, that not having knowledge of the truth of any religion, but only belief that it was true, to determine him in his application of force; he would take himſelf in duty bound to promote his own religion by force; and thereupon force would inevitably be uſed to promote falſe religions, upon thoſe very grounds upon which you pretend to make it ſerviceable only to the true: and this, I ſuppoſe, I have in thoſe pages evidently proved, though you think not fit to give any other anſwer to what I there ſay, but that it is impertinent: and I ſhould have proved ſomething elſe, which you would have done well, by a plain and clear deduction, to have ſhown from my words.

The

[THE TWO FOLLOWING LEAVES OF THE COPY ARE EITHER LOST OR MISLAID.]

After this new invention of yours, "of answering by "specimen," so happily found out for the ease of yourself and other disputants of renown, that shall please to follow it; I cannot presume you should take notice of any thing I have to say: you have assumed the privilege, by showing your strength against one argument, to pronounce all the rest baffled; and therefore to what purpose is it to offer difficulties to you, who can blow them all off with a breath? But yet to apologize for myself to the world, for being of opinion that it is not always from want of consideration, attention, or being unbiassed, that men with firmness of persuasion embrace, and with full assurance adhere to, the wrong side in matters of religion; I shall take the liberty to offer the famous instance of the two Reynolds's, brothers, both men of learning and parts; whereof the one being of the church of England, and the other of the church of Rome, they both desiring each other's conversion to the religion which he himself was of, writ to one another about it, and that with such appearance of solid and clear grounds on both sides, that they were wrought upon by them: each changed his religion, and that with so firm a persuasion and full an assurance of the truth of that which he turned to, that no endeavours or arguments of either of them could ever after move the other, or bring him back from what he had persuaded him to. If now I should ask to which of these two, full assurance pointed out the true religion; you no doubt, if you would answer at all, would say, To him that embraced the church of England, and a papist would say the other: but if an indifferent man were asked whether this full assurance was sufficient to point out the true religion to either of them, he must answer, No; for if it were, they must necessarily have been both of the same religion.

To sum up then what you answer to my saying, "It "cannot be the magistrate's duty to use force to pro- "mote the true religion, because he is not in a capacity "to perform that duty; for not having a certain know-

" ledge, but only his own perſuaſion to point out to " to him which is the true religion, if he be ſatisfied it " is his duty to uſe force to promote the true religion, " it will inevitably follow, that he muſt always uſe it " to promote his own." To which you anſwer, That a perſuaſion of a low degree is not ſufficient to point out that religion to the magiſtrate which he is to promote by force; but that a " firmneſs and ſtability of perſua- " ſuaſion, a full aſſurance, is that which is to point out " to the magiſtrate that religion which he is by force " to promote." Where if by firmneſs and ſtability of perſuaſion and full aſſurance, you mean what the words import; it is plain you confeſs the magiſtrate's duty is to promote his own religion by force; for that is the religion which his firm perſuaſion and full aſſurance points out to him. If by full aſſurance you mean any thing but the ſtrength of perſuaſion; you contradict all that you have ſaid about firmneſs and ſtability, and degrees of perſuaſion; and having in that ſenſe allowed the ſufficiency of my diviſion, where I ſay, " knowledge " or opinion muſt point out that religion to him, which " he is by force to promote;" retract it again, and inſtead thereof, under the name of full aſſurance, you ſubſtitute and put in true religion; and ſo firmneſs of perſuaſion is in effect laid by, and nothing but the name made uſe of: for pray tell me, is firmneſs of perſuaſion, or being of the true religion, either of them by itſelf ſufficient to point out to the magiſtrate that religion which it is his duty to promote by force? For they do not always go together. If being of the true religion by itſelf may do it; your mentioning firmneſs of perſuaſion, grounded on ſolid proof that leaves no doubt, is to no purpoſe, but to miſlead your reaſon; for every one that is of the true religion, does not arrive at that high degree of perſuaſion, that full aſſurance which approaches that which is very near to that which is produced by demonſtration. And in this ſenſe of full aſſurance, which you ſay men may have of the true religion, and can never have of a falſe one; your anſwer amounts to this, that full aſſurance, in him that embraces the true religion, will point out the religion he is by force

to

to promote: where it is plain, that by fulneſs of aſſurance you do mean not the firmneſs of his perſuaſion that points out to him the religion which he is by force to promote, (for any lower degree of perſuaſion to him that embraces the true religion would do it as certainly, and to one that embraces not the true religion, the higheſt degree of perſuaſion would even in your opinion do nothing at all) but his being of the true religion, is that which alone guides him to his duty of promoting the true religion by force. So that to my queſtion, how ſhall a magiſtrate who is perſuaded that it is his and every magiſtrate's duty to promote the true religion by force, be determined in his uſe of force; you ſeem to ſay his firm perſuaſion or full aſſurance of the truth of the religion he ſo promotes muſt determine him; and preſently, in other words, you ſeem to lay the ſtreſs upon his actually being of the true religion. The firſt of theſe anſwers is not true; for I have ſhown, that firmneſs of perſuaſion may and does point out to magiſtrates falſe religions as well as the true: and the ſecond is much what the ſame, as if to one, who ſhould aſk what ſhould enable a man to find the right way who knows it not, it ſhould be anſwered, the being in it. One of theſe muſt be your meaning, chooſe which you pleaſe of them; if you have any meaning at all in your ſixth, and beginning of the ſeventh page, to which I refer the reader; where, if he find nothing elſe, he cannot fail to find a ſpecimen of ſchool-play, of talking uncertainly in the utmoſt perfection, nicely and artificially worded, that it may ſerve for a ſpecimen of a maſter-piece in that kind; but a ſpecimen of the anſwerableneſs of my Letter will require, as I imagine, a little more plain dealing. And to ſatisfy readers, that have not attained to the admiration of ſkilfully ſaying nothing, you muſt directly inform them, whether firmneſs of perſuaſion be or be not ſufficient in a magiſtrate to enable him to do his duty in promoting the true religion by force; or elſe this you have pitched on will ſcarce be a ſample of the anſwerableneſs of all I have ſaid.

But

But you ſtand poſitive in it, and that is like a maſter, that it cannot be inferred from the magiſtrate's being obliged to promote by force the true religion, that every magiſtrate is obliged to promote by force his own religion. And that for the ſame reaſon you had given before, more perplexed and obſcurely, viz. "Becauſe "there is this perpetual advantage on the ſide of the "true religion, that it may and ought to be believed "on clear and ſolid grounds, ſuch as will appear the "more ſo, the more they are examined: whereas no "other religion can be believed ſo, but upon ſuch ap-"pearances only, as will not bear a juſt examina-"tion."

This would be an anſwer to what I have ſaid, if it were ſo that all magiſtrates ſaw the preponderancy of the grounds of belief, which are on the ſide of the true religion; but ſince it is not the grounds and reaſons of a truth that are not ſeen, that do or can ſet the magiſtrate upon doing his duty in the caſe; but it is the perſuaſion of the mind, produced by ſuch reaſons and grounds as do affect it, that alone does, or is capable to determine the magiſtrate in the uſe of force, for performing of his duty; it neceſſarily follows, that if two magiſtrates have equally ſtrong perſuaſions concerning the truth of their religions reſpectively, they muſt both be ſet on work thereby, or neither; for though one be of a falſe, and the other of the true religion; yet the principle of operation, that alone which they have to determine them, being equal in both, they muſt both be determined by it; unleſs it can be ſaid, that one of them muſt act according to that principle, which alone can determine; and the other muſt act againſt it: that is, do what he cannot do; be determined to one thing, by what at the ſame time determines him to another. From which incapacity in magiſtrates to perform their duty by force to promote the true religion, I think it may juſtly be concluded, that to uſe force for the promoting any religion cannot be their duty.

You tell us, it is by the law of nature magiſtrates are obliged to promote the true religion by force. It muſt

be

be owned, that if this be an obligation of the law of nature, very few magiſtrates overlook it; ſo forward are they to promote that religion by force which they take to be true. This being the caſe, I beſeech you tell me what was Huaina Capac, emperor of Peru, obliged to do? Who, being perſuaded of his duty to promote the true religion, was not yet within diſtance of knowing or ſo much as hearing of the chriſtian religion, which really is the true (ſo far was he from a poſſibility to have his belief grounded upon the ſolid and clear proofs of the true religion.) Was he to promote the true religion by force? That he neither did nor could know any thing of; ſo that was morally impoſſible for him to do. Was he to ſit ſtill in the neglect of his duty incumbent on him? That is in effect to ſuppoſe it a duty and no duty at the ſame time. If, upon his not knowing which is the true religion, you allow it not his duty to promote it by force, the queſtion is at an end: you and I are agreed, that it is not the magiſtrate's duty by force to promote the true religion. If you hold it in that caſe to be his duty; what remains for him to do, but to uſe force to promote that religion which he himſelf is ſtrongly, nay, perhaps to the higheſt degree of firmneſs, perſuaded is the true? Which is the granting what I contend for, that, if the magiſtrate be obliged to promote by force the true religion, it will thence follow, that he is obliged to promote by force that religion which he is perſuaded is the true; ſince, as you will have it, force was given him to that end, and it is his duty to uſe it; and he hath nothing elſe to determine it to that end but his own perſuaſion. So that one of theſe two things muſt follow, either that in that caſe it ceaſes to be his duty, or elſe he muſt promote his own religion; chooſe you which you pleaſe *

INDEX

INDEX

TO THE

FIFTH VOLUME.

A.

ARTICLES (of the church of England) the 13th argued from againſt force in religion, 397
—— the 17th argued from to the ſame purpoſe, 521
Athanaſius's creed, of the damnatory ſentence in it, 410
Atheiſm, charged by ſome, upon all who differ from them, 414
—— is not to be tolerated by magiſtrates. 416

B.

BENTLEY, (Dr.) his judgment of the cauſe of infidelity, 469
Briars. Vid. Thorns.

C.

CARELESS of their ſalvation, ſuch not to be neglected, 125, 296
Caſtration, as juſtly to be uſed by the magiſtrates to make chaſte, as force to promote religion, 81
Ceremonies, of the jews, were beggarly elements, and much more thoſe which are human, 157
Chriſtians, ſome ſo called are of different religions, 55
Chriſtianity, prevailing without force, a mark of its truth, 63, 64
Church, what it is, 13, 26
—— none born a member of it, 13
—— the power of it, 32
—— has no authority to perſecute, 34
—— magiſtrates have no power to enforce its decrees, 30, 33
—— is to determine indifferent circumſtances of worſhip, 32
—— magiſtrates have not power to prohibit in it what is lawful in the commonwealth, 34
Civil intereſts, what they are, 10
—— the duty of magiſtrates to ſecure them, ibid.

Clergy,

Clergy, their office sufficient, without other employments, 172
Commonwealth, what it is, 10
——— end of it, not to force men in religion, but to free them from such force, ibid.
——— no necessity to exclude jews, &c. from it, to prevent the seduction of christians, 235, &c.
Conformity (in religion) and not conviction is the end of penal laws, 73
——— men may be brought to it, without true religion, 339, 340
——— no ground to presume it is always upon conviction, 340
——— whether it be from reason and conviction, or not, cannot be certainly known, 339, 340
——— some things required to it, hard to be understood, 410, 411
Consideration, to force men to it impracticable, 242, 243
——— conformists may need punishment to bring them to it, as much as dissenters, 244
——— it is hard to understand, whether penal laws are designed to bring men to it, 389
Vid. Examination.
Conscience, none can be saved by acting contrary to it, though it be erroneous, 28
——— laws contrary to it, must be passively submitted to, by private men, 44
——— a man sins, by acting contrary to it, though it be misguided, 146
Creeds ought not to be imposed by the magistrate, 152

D.

DISSENTERS should not be punished, to make them consider, more than others, 96
——— ought to be convinced a church is true, before they conform to it, 261
——— to punish them for not considering, is to punish them without law, 87
Dissenters if they must be punished, it is hard to set bounds how far, 262, &c.
——— the severity formerly used against them in England, 286—288
——— how long it is pretended they must be punished, 293, &c.
Divisions. Vid. Sects and Schism.

E.

EVIDENCE, which may be sufficient for one, may not be so for another, 297
——— men are incompetent judges, what is sufficient to every one, 299
Examination (of religion) force no proper means to lead to it, 96
——— many conformists, as well as others, neglect it, 89
——— none can be judicially proved to refuse it, 100
——— to punish a whole party, as neglecting it, is absurd, 101
——— many are incapable of making it strictly, ibid.
——— how far it is neglected, must be referred to the divine judgment, 103
——— want of it, only pretended for punishing dissenters, 129, &c.
——— punishment, for want of it, would fall heavy upon many churchmen, 131
——— the absurdity of using force to promote it, 97, &c.
——— none but God can judge when 'tis sufficient, 299, &c.
——— the duty of magistrates as well as others, 179, 180

F.

FAITH, articles of it not to be imposed by human laws, 39
——— how it differs from knowledge properly so called, 144
Flood (of Noah) idolatry generally prevailed not soon after it, 470, 482
——— the true religion continued above 2000 years after it, 472

Force is not capable to convince the mind, 11
—— the use of it belongs only to magistrates, ibid.
—— christianity flourished best, when without the help of it, 63, 64
—— not lawful, tho' it might prove some way useful, 69
—— (in religion) usually prejudices men against it, 70
—— used only to produce conformity, not conviction, 73
—— not necessary to make men consider, 74
—— the use of it, for this end, is a vain pretence, 75
—— is much more likely to bring men to errour than truth, 76
—— employed to make people consider, is neither useful nor just, 78
—— no warrant in scripture for using it, 82
—— no less necessary for conformists than nonconformists, 94, 96
—— the uncertainty of the pretended end for which it should be used, 95
—— none have right to use it, 112
—— should rather be used to drive bad men out of the church, than to bring any in, 115
—— those who plead for the moderate use of it, should show what bounds should be set to it, 142, &c.
—— if some force may be used to bring men to religion, more may be used to advance them in it, 134
—— no sovereign has authority to use it toward another, 163
—— not necessary to promote religion, though religion be necessary, 164, &c.
—— not likely to advance the true religion, but the contrary, 168
—— may be avoided by outward conformity alone, 168, 323
—— unreasonably used to make men judge more sincerely for themselves, 177, 178
—— takes the care of men's souls from themselves, 196, 197
Force, magistrates not commissioned by the law of nature to use it, 202
—— how parents are authorized to use it, 206, &c,
—— and masters, 206
—— not using it, intimates not a power given in vain, 214
—— the use of it makes not men good, nor secures God's blessing to a nation, 221, 378
—— by the same rule a lesser degree of it is needful, a greater may be so, 262
—— no proper means to remove prejudices, 297
—— concerning the end of its being used, 303, &c.
—— it is equally just for one church to use it as another, 333
—— the spiritual gain which sufferers may reap, though it be misapplied, a vain pretence, 367, &c. 393
—— kings being "nursing fathers," &c. no good argument for using it, 370
—— its use, tho' designed to bring men to truth, may bring them to falshood, 378, &c. 399
—— is likely to lead far more into errour than truth, 378, 399, 407
—— no proof that ever it has done good, 380
—— using it to make men consider impertinent, 386
—— the use of it cannot promote real holiness, 390, 391
—— if it brings any to consideration, it is only by accident, 392
—— it is most likely to prevail on the loose and careless, 395
—— its unfitness to bring men to true religion, argued from the 13th article of our church, 397
—— may require extraordinary strength to withstand it, when used to bring to a false religion, 400
—— may be equally used by all magistrates who believe their religion true, 401, 402

Force, it is absurd to use it, without pretending to infallibility, 407, &c.
—— the want of it not at first supplied by miracles, 442, &c.
—— is necessary (if at all) to make ministers do their duty, 463
—— the use of it prevented not a horrible apostasy in the roman empire, 483
—— has (as far as history informs us) always been injurious to true religion, 484, &c.
—— the use of it no scripture-method for advancing religion, 497

H.

HERESY, wherein it consists, 55
—— imposers of their own interpretations of scripture, guilty of it, 56
Human society, the preservation of it is the magistrate's power, 10
—— no opinion contrary to the safety of it should be tolerated, 45

I.

IDOLATERS may be tolerated, 35, 51, &c.
—— why not tolerated by the law of Moses, 37
—— their case was peculiar among the Israelites, ibid.
Idolatry did not root out the true religion soon after the flood, 471, 483
—— was probably first introduced by great men, 475, &c.
—— the most likely original of it was tyranny, 476
Indifferent things, the magistrate's power about them, 30
—— not to be imposed in divine worship, 31
—— some of them to be determined by a church, 32
Job, the book of him probably written by a jew, 236

K.

KINGS, their being called "nursing fathers," how to be understood, 371

L.

LAW, (of Moses) why idolatry was punished by it, 37
—— foreigners not compelled to observe the rites of it, 38
Legislative power, the end of it is the outward good of society, 34, &c.
Love, persecutions rising from it, would rather be against wickedness than opinions, 6, &c.

M.

MAgistrates, their duty is to secure civil interests, not the salvation of souls, 10
—— care of souls only common to them with others, 11
—— are as liable to errour in religion as others, 12, 76
—— ought not to use force in matters of religion, 29
—— have no authority to impose ceremonies in the church, 29.—Nor to forbid those used by others, 33
—— their power about indifferent things, 30
—— may not punish all sins against God, 34, &c.
—— are to punish only those things which injure the society, 40, &c.
—— by what means they are brought to join with churchmen in persecution, 53, 54
—— have no commission to punish errours in religion, 40
—— only a small number of them of the true religion, 76
—— no advantage in committing the care of our souls to them, 76, 122
—— their using force to promote the true religion or their own,

own, is in effect the same, 128, 143, &c.
Magistrates have no authority to impose creeds, 153
——— are not to judge of truth for other men, 173
——— have not more knowledge of religion than others, 179
——— the apostle's saying, "We can do nothing against the truth but for it," not applicable to them, 360
——— have not authority, like parents or school-masters, to use force, 205
——— discovering them to be in the wrong, adds little to finding out the truth, 360, 361
——— ought to assist religion by suppressing wickedness, 65, 66
——— are not commissioned by the law of nature to use force in religion, 205
Means (of salvation), no other should be used, than what God has appointed, 81, 82
—— what are proper for promoting religion, 82
—— those which are sufficient are given to all, 113, &c.
—— the greatest part of the world without them, if force be necessary, 389, &c.
Ministers, (of religion) of what sort they are, who want to have their doctrines enforced, 151, 152
——— doing their duty aright, would render force unnecessary, 526
Miracles never used to supply the want of force, 454
——— absurdly reckoned among human means, 442
——— not wrought in the view of all who were converted, 443
——— we have the same advantage by them, as most had in the first ages, ibid.
——— were continued (according to church-history) after christianity was established by human laws, 452, &c.
Miracles were not often repeated to those who rejected the gospel, 454, 455
——— will be always necessary, supposing them so whenever men neglect their duty, 459, &c.
——— were not a necessary means of conviction in the apostles time, 523, 526

N.

NATIONAL religion, none such can claim to be the true, exclusive of others, 422

O.

OPINIONS merely speculative, ought to be tolerated, 40
——— contrary to human society, are not to be tolerated, 45
Oppression is the great cause of civil commotions, 47, 48

P.

PAGANISM, how zeal against it should be expressed, 233, &c.
Penal laws, not designed to make men consider but conform, 387, &c.
——— how a national religion loses ground by the relaxation of them, 467—469
——— whether atheism, &c. increase by their relaxation, ibid.
Vid. Punishments.
Penalties. Vid. Force.
Persecution, what it signifies, 142
——— if it were designed for saving souls, persons conforming on it would be examined concerning their convictions, 197
——— only useful to fill the church with hypocrites, 373, 374
Vid. Force, Punishments.
Political societies, all advantages which may be gained by them, cannot be reckoned the end of them, 117

Prejudices, not to be removed by force, 297
Vid. Force.
Punishments (for errours in religion) are unjust, though moderate, 62, &c.
——— not lawfully used to make people consider, 73, 79, 94
——— human laws inflict them not to make men examine, 88
——— the pretence for inflicting them in France on the protestants, 87
——— national churches need them as much as dissenters, 94, 99
——— if beneficial, it is unkind to withhold them from any, 108
——— the difficulty of determining the due measures of them, 104, &c.
——— commonly least used, where they are most needful, 99, 118
——— it is unjust to inflict them, for inforcing things not necessary, 248, &c.
——— the fault for which they are inflicted, points out the end of them, 243, &c.
——— leaving the measures of them to the magistrates's prudence, justifies the greatest, 281, &c.
——— admitting them as necessary in matters of religion, leads to the sharpest severities, 108, &c.
——— prejudice the minds of men against truth, 70
——— are designed only to bring to outward conformity, 323, &c.
——— not inflicted by the apostles to bring men to religion, or make them consider, 437—439

R.

RELIGION is the same to all, who have the same rule of faith and worship, 326, &c.
——— if true, it prevails by its own strength without force, 64
Vid. True religion.
Reynolds, a remarkable story of two brothers of this name, 78

S.

SAcrament (of the Lord's supper) how it has been prostituted by human laws, 73
——— who are to be blamed for its prostitution, 342
Salvation (of souls) the care of it belongs not to magistrates, as such, 10, &c.
——— why the care of each man's belongs only to himself, 23—25
——— not the design of penal laws about religion, 69
——— pretending care of this for using force in religion is prevarication, 351
Salvation impossible to be promoted, by forcing people in religious matters, 391, &c.
Scepticism, not justly chargeable upon toleration, 414, 415
Schism, wherein it consists, 55
——— who are the chief causes of it, 238, 239
School-masters, their using force to make their scholars learn, is no warrant for using it in religious matters, 206, 209
Scriptures are to be consulted as our guide in religion, 353, &c.
——— contain all necessary means of salvation, 519, 520
Sects (or divisions) who are the chief cause of them, 238, 239
——— whether national churches may not be such as well as others, 239, 240
Sedition, wherever it is practised, should be punished alike, 51
Sins, several of them are not punishable by magistrates, 36
Society, every advantage which may be attained by it, is not the end of it, 213, &c.
Vid. Human.
Soul, the care of it belongs not to magistrates, as such, 10

Soul, the care of men's own, better left to themſelves than to others, 23, 28

T.

THORNS and briars may be laid in the way by Providence, but ſhould not by men, 162
Toleration (in religion) often vindicated upon too narrow principles, 3
——— chief mark of the true church, 5
——— is very agreeable to the goſpel, and to reaſon, 9
——— is not inconſiſtent with excommunication, 16, 17
——— ſhould be mutually exerciſed by different churches, 17, 18
——— ought to be promoted by church-officers, 20, 21
——— it is the duty of magiſtrates, 23
——— ſhould not be extended to all immoral practices, 33, 34
——— ought to be extended to pagans and idolaters, 35, 52
——— to whom it may not be extended, 45
——— all churches ſhould profeſs it, as the foundation of their liberty, 47
——— granting it prevents dangers from diſſenting aſſemblies, 48
——— will cauſe all who enjoy it to be watchful for the public peace, 50, 51
——— ſhould extend to all things lawful in common converſation, 51
——— want of it produces diſturbances upon account of religion, 53
——— truth is a gainer by it, 64, 65
——— is no cauſe of ſects and diviſions, 414, &c.
——— the pretended ill effects of it refuted, ibid.
Toleration, true religion in no danger to be loſt by it, 466
——— is not the cauſe of general corruption, 470, &c.
——— part of a fourth letter in defence of it, 549
——— new way of anſwering the third letter for it, 550
——— the anſwer only promiſes inſtead of performing, 552
Tranſlation (of the Bible) a remark concerning the authority of the Engliſh one, 496, 497
True religion of the higheſt concern to all perſons, 317
——— force no proper means to bring men to it, 317, &c.
——— is diſhonoured, by uſing force for promoting it, 319
——— ſeveral perſons may be of it, though differing in ſome things, 327, 328
——— all who ſuppoſe themſelves to be of it, have equal right to impoſe on others, 419, &c.
——— no nations can lay claim to is excluſive of others, 422
——— magiſtrates muſt know it, before they can puniſh the rejectors of it, 425—428
——— lenity the beſt way of promoting it, 433, 434
——— whether it can ſubſiſt without actual miracles, or force, 435
——— it was not loſt for want of force, in a few ages after the flood, 471, &c.
Truth (of religion) the beſt way to find it, is by a good life, 66
Tyranny, promoting it, was probably the firſt cauſe of idolatry, 476, &c.

U.

UNbelievers. Vid. Infidels.
Uniformity, (the act of) the declared intention of it, 388
Unity, wherein that which Chriſt prayed for conſiſts, 237
—— who are moſt guilty of breaking it, 238

Uſefulneſs of things does not always render them lawful, 80
——— we are liable to judge wrongly concerning it, 81, &c.
——— to argue from the lawfulneſs of things, is preſumptuous, 82

W.

WORSHIP, the law of nature aſcribes the power of appointing the parts of it to God only, 156, 157

END OF THE FIFTH VOLUME.

DATE DUE

JUN 15 1995

JUN 15 1997

GAYLORD

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

The works of John Locke.
Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library
1 1012 00158 8898